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PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE  
OF AN  
EDUCATIONAL FREELANCE



DR. EWALD HAUFE  
" *Aus dem Leben eines freien Pädagogen* "

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PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE  
OF AN  
EDUCATIONAL FREELANCE

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN  
BY  
WILLIAM H. HERFORD B.A. (LOND.)  
AUTHOR OF  
"THE SCHOOL" AND "STUDENT'S FROEBEL"

*" Truth—once to make the whole world free,  
Is naught, at first, but Heresy "*

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## TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

ONE who reads this little book with attention, and a touch of sympathy, will observe "two streams of tendency" running through it: they might be called Revolt and Reform. At school, discontent with formal teaching, in which he sees no reason; hatred of rote-learning and mental drill, of which he sees no good come; almost sour a very sweet nature, and turn a quick, lively boy eager to know whatever can be known, and do whatever can be done, into a reserved, over quiet, almost fretful youth. Change to a freer air, to work that he understands, restores his spirits but confirms his revolt. The Teachers' college, where—according to *his* impressions—that is done which ought not to have been done, and *that* left undone which ought to have been done, with singular consistency, and where his own health of mind and body plainly suffered; "prepared" him for the post of elementary teacher in a poverty-stricken village, where every help and comfort

seemed absent; where nothing but love for nature and children saved him from collapse. A happy translation to another school—where for a year or more he “felt himself in Paradise”—restored the tone of his mind, and made him long to gain, by University study, scientific foundation for his ill-assorted knowledge. So he entered himself student at Jena and at Göttingen; heard several interesting lectures, and made some valuable friends; but concluded that the university system was still imperfect, while the science and art of teaching were utterly, and it seemed wilfully, neglected. On these abstract studies followed a long series of practical experiences in teaching, for his daily bread—*Brod-studien* with a vengeance!—in Italy, France, and Switzerland, as well as Germany.

These “Passages” all built up in him the strongest conviction that modern European education is everywhere on a wrong tack, and demands very radical changes. All the while he shows the surest faith in the power of education, natural and rational. He condemns whatever in Germany is called “national education,” as being the outcome of efforts of State and Church in unholy alliance, to exploit, to use, the people for the profit of the privileged classes; while he asserts with inspiring fervour that true education is the one means of saving and renewing the nation. His aim to amend is just as strong as his revolt. From his first days as assistant teacher, whatever he sees—feels—to be wrong in theory, anti-popular, inhuman—the impulse is in him to reform. All blunders, each set of unfavourable circumstances, every spoiled mind, makes him sad; but also makes

him think ; intellect being as active with him as feelings are quick. Almost ignorant of Pestalozzi, save as of one whom all praise and few follow, like a Higher Master, he makes his own and applies Pestalozzi's spell—" *Anschauung*." He works to bring objects, Things—abstract and concrete—into actual contact with the pupil's senses and mind ; putting words, names—those importunate pretenders !—into their proper subordinate place. Unconscious of F. Froebel, to a degree that shocks this translator, he takes hold of Froebel's most pregnant idea, "Learn by doing," develops the fruitful thought, and makes of it the very heart of his method. And what are his means ? How did primeval man begin to be civilised ? By means of Nature : how else ? Nature is about us yet ; and one day we shall believe that all we truly *know*—the stuff of all real knowledge—we learn from her : *all the rest*—hearsay, rote-knowledge—being *Vox et præterea nihil*. Yet we let nature be ! We "touch not, taste not, handle not," and sit in close rooms to read and memorise notes and labels in crabbed script, of what is in full—outside. In these "Passages" we see Dr. Haufe continually trying to find the way back to Nature. Now he makes good a step in the right direction ; gazes around him, and feels that all is not yet clear ; then another step, and another ; till at last he cries, with tears of joy, "I have found it," when he recognises that the one and only *end* of human education is that harmonious development of humanity, the aim after which seems to be Man's one essential distinction : perceives that the *means* of man's education is the whole of Nature ; all her works and ways,

Man being a part of her : sees that the *method* of education is work, exertion, bodily and mental effort ; orderly, reasonable, happy use of these means.

Dr. Haufe has unfolded his system in a larger treatise, "Natürliche Erziehung" (Natural Education—not yet translated into English), for which this little book would fain open the way.

WILLIAM H. HERFORD.



## PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE OF AN EDUCATIONAL FREELANCE

My native village in the land of the Wends was anything but free! What could you expect, indeed, in a flourishing rural village of which a mighty church with a powerful parson formed the centre?

It was an agricultural place, having little traffic with the outer world. There was no railway; even a mail-coach did not exist; a postwoman brought about communication with the nearest town, once a week. Whoever had a taste for circulating libraries called in the *colporteur*, the honestest fellow living, who, with his pack of books upon his back, completed his country circuit every Friday.

For all that, life was not uninteresting; for those were times when people still travelled on Shanks's pony, so that now and then this or that star appeared upon the horizon—a scholar, a doctor, a clergyman, an author, and the like; and any one who took pleasure in a patriarchal life might tarry long in my village, for surrounded by its various crops it offered a picture of rural tranquillity.

The spirit of liberty penetrates everywhere. It is like the sun's rays, which influence the whole earth.

Even my native village was not always quite without stirrings of freedom; they were, indeed, now and then so strong as seriously to alarm our clergy and aristocracy. It happened that the influential pastor, whose living enabled him to keep a carriage, had once been a fellow student of my father's; and it could not but appear strange that one, who had formerly preached liberty, should, when he attained the dignity of office, have become meek as a lamb, and in constant terror lest his former comrade should fatally compromise him. My father's character and experiences, it is true, were not wholly without severity. He was a man of many-sided culture, and possessed no little personal and moral courage; he was a distinguished physician, a friend of the people, and had been formerly concerned in politics. Moreover, after the first sermon which he preached prior to his theological examination, he had given up theology for medicine. But most inconvenient of all to the pastor must have been his strongly marked democratic tendency. My father was a favourite with the people, for whose enlightenment he constantly exerted himself, and it was a thoroughly ennobling enlightenment. This was in the time of the peasants' release from forced labour, in which matter my maternal grandfather also had worked as a relief-commissioner. How easily might not the church sustain losses, and much more the aristocratic landowners of our parish! Add to this, that my father had founded a "Mutual Improvement Society," whose influence spread far and wide, so that soon peasant-farmers, millers, blacksmiths, carriage-builders, even

apprentices and workmen, took part in it, through lectures, recitations, singing-classes, and concerts. In the drawing-rooms it began to be feared that the "culture-club" might be transformed into a "patriotic union," such as my father had founded in another district, A.D. 1848. The fact that he had then marched upon the capital with the people in insurrection, a fellow student secretly letting him escape instead of arresting him, thus giving him illegal support, gave, with other matters, sufficient reason for constantly resisting my father's methods of enlightenment.

Yet he was no heretic, but rather a wholesome salt for a dull neighbourhood. He was absolutely indifferent to what his former friend, the influential pastor, and the three-and-twenty feudal gentlemen of the parish thought about him; he might lose one estate-owner after another (as patients) but he would remain what he was; and he remained so till the end of his life. Thus it came about that a freer spirit began to dwell in that little corner of the world. First one thinking man appeared, then another, and sometimes there were several of them at once. Especially do I recall a joiner, the amount of whose reading and whose original thoughts filled me with admiration. He had an interest in everything that lies above the common level of life; he was very fond of studying philosophical works of a popular sort; and, when a man of seventy, not having seen me for twenty years he asked after me and wished to read some work of mine. To be sure, he did not express his opinions very openly, for he feared the weight of clerical power; one word from

the pulpit, and the master-joiner might have planed his wood for nothing.

No doubt the example of my father, who devoted himself unselfishly to the public good, influenced me. Although I never inclined to that life of the political association of students to which he, when a student, had devoted himself, yet I was deeply impressed by his intercourse with men like Robert Blum, as also by his correspondence with many congenial spirits, among whom I remember Dr. Adolf Douai. Even to this day, the picture of my father moves me like a flame that will not be extinguished; and if I was sometimes ready to lose hope, his life showed me that I had to do what I recognised as true and right.

My father never really troubled himself very much about my education; he left that almost entirely to my mother, but he influenced me by his actions. "Go out to the brook," he would say to us sometimes, "you will understand books better when you are older." Our mother, too, could seldom devote much time to us. She had not only given birth to thirteen children, but had so much to do with the dispensing that she had scarcely any free time till the evening when we went to bed. Nevertheless, she had no slight influence upon me. I realised her struggles and her life of patient endurance, for although in feeling conservative, and orthodox in opinion, she did all in her power to lighten the burden of my father's existence. Without her he would have been ruined, for he did not understand how to make people pay their bills. I see her yet, anxious, entreating, and giving advice.

I see her writing out accounts and pressing for payment, for my father would never have anything to do with money matters. Thus she brought us up to be economical, and if she warned us a hundred times not to mix in the turmoil of the world, she was quite justified from her point of view. "One can be faithful to one's principles, but one need not run into danger; one need not risk everything," she would say. She was abundantly familiar with care, especially with money-cares. We children grew up in an atmosphere of money-troubles, and this was not to our advantage; a child but too easily runs the risk of losing its joyousness, which is as necessary to it as sunshine to flowers.

But sunshine was not wanting. The early part of my life was spent largely in the open air; I was quite at home with streams and thickets. Moreover, my father, as a lover of music, did much to enliven us, as did my mother as a story-teller. Her store of tales, helped by an admirable memory, was inexhaustible. I have never met any one who was her equal in this respect; she had an especially good memory for literature, biographies, and tales of family-life. I remember that she once restored a number of prescriptions correctly from oral information. She was a reliable dictionary until about her seventieth year; her memory was only surpassed by her eyesight, which remained clear and sound up to a great age.

If the sunshine of family life was not often ours, I can still say that my home, in spite of its solitude, gave me abundant training, and sowed the seeds of independent thought and action.

After home life, Nature was my most influential teacher, and my feeling for her was all the stronger because I had ways and means of becoming familiar with her. We had a very large garden with many trees, and I found opportunity almost daily to familiarise myself with animal-life. I went about with horses, and patted cows and sheep; I learnt to observe the birds in garden and wood; and at home I took care of dogs and cats, and once had nearly sixty rabbits, whom I, equipped with buckskin breeches and a whip, drove out to patches of rich grass and clover; and for whom I often fetched food from a distance, or built hutches to shelter them from the cold. I watched the life of the animal-world by the hour, and wandered about the fields, or by the stream, to catch cray-fish, etc. I might be found both climbing trees, and in the earth-caves of the old Servians; wherever there was anything of interest to be found, there I was at home. No storm was too strong for me, no distance too far, no weather too bad—I would be out of doors. So it came about that I learnt to see and hear, and everything interested me, and awoke in me eager thought and feeling. No wonder that the love of Nature was planted deep in me, and grew like the swelling brook. If I had not had Nature I should have become a dry machine, in spite of manuals and picture-books. For the best that is in me I have to thank her, who unlocked my reflection and thought. She was my best instructress, my second mother. I should have been spared a great struggle had I received at school an education, such as I have to-day achieved through experience and my own research; I should

have gained in power, and my youth would have been happier. As it was, my young life was embittered by the curse of an unnatural education, which caused me years of torment and discontent ; so that many years passed, as wearisome as the days are to one who has lost his way in the desert.

In the fifties, things were as they are now ; children could not be sent to school too early. I was just five years old when they took me to the village school. There was no attempt at a transition, from free child-life to the constraint of school. Yesterday a merry child of Nature, to-day a slave. No wonder that after a few days I did not want to go to school any more, and had to be carried thither in a basket by the farm servant. I was not bad-natured, but a willing child, they said ; and that I behaved as I did shows that there ought to be some interval between home and school. At last I became used to school discipline, and the crushing of childish imagination ; even the prairie horse gets used to the reins of a rough rider.

The village school dated from early times, and had been originally a sort of secondary school. "The school shall be so ordered," thus it stands in the inspector's report of 1559, "that Wendish boys shall learn German and Latin, also the *principia grammatices* (elements of grammar) ; that they may be so educated that they can be promoted to the royal schools, as the Elector, our most gracious master, shall order." In the year 1731 there was, it is true, a sort of primary school, and in the year 1842 there was a substantial school-house, in which about 150 children were taught. In the whole neighbourhood

there was no better school-building nor a more capable master.

As the instruction in the village school was only given in Wendish, the teacher was of Wendish extraction. He was an excellent man, and of such cultivation that he won the lasting friendship of my father. I too became much attached to my first teacher on account of his personal qualities. He was born to be something better than the servant of clerical and feudal masters, under whose oppression he had much to suffer. If the school had been a place for free human development, he would have brought up a new generation ; as it was he had to submit to the use and wont of those in authority. What could he do ? Run away ? The school would have remained what it was, the conflict of a gnat with an elephant. He did what millions are forced to do if they will not starve, he tried to be a purifying salt—quietly. He was, however, in the power of the clergy and the aristocracy ; so it is no wonder that the school was in the same condition then as now. Religious instruction was the centre of all, as providing salvation in the other world. Side by side our dear Three R's laboured for this world, so far as the most elementary getting on was concerned ; and in order that the crying demands of progress should not be quite neglected, a miserable dessert of "useful information" was given, crumbs which the teacher scraped together out of "Manuals," for it was considered preferable that all his learning should be acquired after this fashion. If he be a thinker, he is politely requested to draw in his horns. Now my teacher was a pattern of non-resisting submission,



## AN EDUCATIONAL FREELANCE

so the school was carried on according to the plans of those in authority. Scripture history, verses of hymns, portions of the Catechism—so it went on day by day; a mountain of religious matter had to be imparted and digested, and there we sat hearing and learning by rote, and at home we wept, because we could not repeat word for word the story of the burning bush, of Balaam's ass, and the sun standing still. But this was not enough, we little ones, who could scarcely sit upright or hold a pencil, were trimmed for the rack of learning to read and write. Children who have scarcely any conceptions or ideas are forced by law to read; and children who have nothing to say, must learn writing in order to give expression to truths learnt by rote. But when should a child learn to read? Surely not until it has gained a store of ideas and thoughts, so that it understands what it reads. And when should it learn to write? Surely not till it has at its disposal a store of experiences, so that it can say what it knows; has itself experienced and thought. Should not spoken, be attended to before written, language? And is not an inversion of the order, synonymous with mechanical drill? But people are not yet agreed on this point. Thus the years of school-life pass by, not like a stream flowing through verdant meadows, but like a skeleton in a mouldering vault. The engine goes on working, books and newspapers are full of talk about human training, and yet the new school inspector does what the old one did; publishers and primer-makers pocket nice little sums whilst independent teachers starve. People talked about Pestalozzi then as they do now, but true

objective teaching was wanting, as it is to-day. And why? Thorough-going school-reform is still a figure of cloud. Most teachers must themselves enjoy a thorough education before they are capable of appreciating its problems and its importance. That is the first condition. The second is to emancipate the school from the church. The third is that the State should have money and spend it on a new system of education. Deep in the night who can believe in the dawn breaking? The throne needs the altar, and so the wolf in sheep's clothing is permitted to swallow the school along with the teacher.

How did it fare with Nature, the great educator? We never had an animal or plant, nor stones, nor liquids put before us, nor did I ever see an experiment in physics or chemistry. Nothing of the kind. Things that lay hold of young people, make them all eye and ear, enthrall the lazy and the absent-minded, and fill the child-mind with delight—of these the school had nothing, absolutely nothing. No school-garden, nor aquarium; no museum of natural history, no physical apparatus—nothing!

We sat like paupers within the bare walls, as if glued to our forms, learning biblical wisdom and the history of our country, and in geography that precious Palestine was worked to death. There it hung, the great wall-map, the centre of geographical instruction. Of course, geography had to be the servant of religion, as the school was of the church. Are things better to-day? Surely! Are they much better? No! Pedagogical science has gagged itself; it flung itself upon the methods of subjective education and instruction, which opened the door

for religion to step in. The Herbartians became the most distinguished coadjutors in church teaching, for their system gives religion the widest scope for bringing everything into her service; wherefore the school of the present day has not advanced a step in the direction of free education.

It was fortunate, indeed, that I was not much school-mastered during my first six or seven years. To be sure, there was some whipping and solitary confinement because I did not come home at the right time, and brought torn trousers with me, but I had ample opportunity of busying my restless spirit without having always to give an account of my doings, or being dosed with moralising. But it soon came to an end. From seven years old I had pianoforte lessons; and some one or other—the pastor most likely—had suggested to my father that I should have instruction in classics. So I had *volens volens* to study languages.

To-day I look upon this as a serious blunder, of which my father, as well as his adviser, was guilty. Education is such an important matter, that I am utterly amazed at their putting me so early into classical training. I was master neither of my native language nor of Wendish, and the reason was very simple. At home only German was spoken, but as soon as I went among the people I had to speak Wendish. Consequently, I was not perfect in either language as I should have otherwise been.

Instead of letting me quietly perfect myself in German and Wendish, or, at least, in my native language, I was forced to learn a second and third

foreign language, so that I was all at once overburdened with work that did not suit me. There ensued years of unwilling learning. I did not venture to complain for fear of hurting my parents' feelings, and I was afraid of the pastor, who was inspector of the school. The pastor gave the Latin lessons, the French lessons were given to me by a Frenchwoman, the wife of the schoolmaster in a neighbouring village, to which I repaired twice a week. It is true that she understood how to teach me the elements of the French language, for I was at once forced into conversation, but I felt myself unfit; which was all the more unpleasant, as madame spoke neither German nor Wendish. Far more tormenting were the Latin lessons. The pastor believed in an excessive use of grammar, drumming through sentence after sentence with me, and it soon became evident that I could get on but slowly from lack of sufficient knowledge of German. Things became worse when he took on another boy (Wendish), who was four years older than I, and more advanced in every respect. Thus the lessons became a torment. Once when I wept the pastor said, "What are you crying for?" "It is too hard," I answered. "Too hard!" he cried; "Nonsense, take more pains, if you don't learn better you will grow up a good-for-nothing!" Such scenes were repeated twenty, thirty, a hundred times. Do what I could, the pastor persisted in saying that I would not learn. I indeed learnt and learnt as well as I could, but did not get on like my schoolfellow, and at the same time I lost my child-like fondness for play. I became a depressed,

nervous boy, and I even parted with my rabbits. So things went on for several years.

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Then came a change. I had been thinking that I should go to the Grammar School, of which my father had already spoken, when things took a different turn. Once when he was again in difficulties, his friend the choirmaster had told him that I ought to become a teacher in an elementary school, that I was suited for it, and that the prospects were very favourable. "I shall take you for two years to your uncle's in W——," said my father one day, to prepare me for a new step in life. "Why am I not to go to the Grammar School?" I asked, in surprise. "You are to be a teacher, a thoroughly capable teacher," he replied. I must have looked very unhappy, for he folded me in his arms and said, smoothing the hair from my face: "You will understand all this by-and-bye. I think that the choirmaster is right. I say with him, that medicine and teaching are two noble professions, the one for the bodily, the other for the spiritual good of mankind. Good teachers are needed everywhere you know; young people must have good teachers, or all else is of no avail. And I'll tell you something else: I cannot send you all to college. Think what an expense Richard and Paul are, and now Ida must go to a boarding-school. How can I do all that? I work day and night, but it can't be managed. I shall arrange for you to have private lessons in W—— and at the Teachers' College;

then, if at any time you don't like it, you can go to the Grammar School. Do you see?"

The back door of private preparation for the university, an enormous sacrifice as I soon learnt, was finally attractive enough to make me agree to the proposal. So I went to my uncle's and remained two years in his hospitable house. A new life began, each day enriched my knowledge, for my residence in the large manufacturing village soon enabled me to overcome the last vestige of homesickness.

We led a stirring social life; theatrical performances and concerts were frequent. There were besides gymnastic, shooting, and fire-brigade clubs and almost all the young people went in for music. We sang in the choir at church, and in winter even the children made an orchestra of several instruments. The life was an entirely new one; the breath of freedom blew in every corner. There was not a trace of the predominance of the church or of the noblesse; the oppression to which my native place had been subjected was swept away. Every one was outspoken, and though this grated on me sometimes, owing partly to the rough dialect, yet I felt that I had more liberty. How reserved, how shut up in myself, I had been at home! Now I was more courageous; I soon saw that I could learn much at school; everything was healthier. I practised a great deal of music with my excellent friend the choirmaster, and for the first time I was induced to take part in musical performances. I even ventured to play the organ in public. I was stirred up to mental activity, made progress, and got on so well

in drawing that my uncle once said: "You have drawn our chanticleer so well, that I can recognise him."

After some time I had filled a portfolio with pictures, and played fairly difficult pianoforte pieces in the village concerts. The secret of my well-being could only be the freer spirit which characterised the community. I did not see fine gentlemen with peasant inferiors, but manufacturers, who met their weavers and workmen in eating-house and concert-hall. Occasionally the best actor was a bleacher who, when on the stage, changed parts with his master. The spirit of work in common stamped the whole, and matured both flowers and fruit in school and home.

Thus I felt that my powers unfolded and the joy of production grew. Where the soul is crippled, there the body dies also. I felt more and more clearly that my native village was without flesh and blood. I was drawn within the sphere of progress, and began to think.

My uncle had no small influence upon me; he was a master-dyer, who understood not only Indigo, but even better the art of thinking. When I saw him in his blue apron with a book before him, I was often strangely moved. "What book is that?" I asked him once, when he was sitting in his comfortable wooden room. "That is nothing that concerns you," he said smiling, "no children's book." This had an effect. What he did not wish happened. I took advantage of a favourable moment and looked into the book.

I had expected to see a novel, such as I had seen

my mother read. But I read there, *Ludwig Feuerbach* —“God, Freedom, and Immortality.” I looked into the book, read a sentence here and there, like one driven by curiosity, and although I understood nothing, I felt as if I had had a cold douche. I put the book down on the bureau, and thought I had committed a sin. I did not say a word to any one; but do what I would, I could not help thinking of what I had read. Of course, I had often heard about wicked people, but once when I had heard the following words thundered from the pulpit: “Cursed be those who curse God!” I had turned pale and trembled. I thought of my uncle, wondered whether he was an unbeliever whom the church would curse, and a thousand thoughts passed through my mind. Weeks passed, and I still felt timid about speaking to my uncle. I often feared he had noticed that I had had the book in my hands. “Are you not coming to church with us, uncle?” I asked one Sunday morning. “I don’t go to church,” he answered drily. “When are you going again?” I asked once more. “I do not go, your aunt goes,” he said, turning to some occupation. I asked once more thoughtlessly: “Do you never go to church?” He answered, looking at me quietly: “I do not go, because I have not time enough. Your father has no time for church, either.”

It was the first time that I had thought of it; I recalled that I had not seen him at church for years. The fact was strange enough to set me thinking more and more.

Weeks had gone by, when a newspaper came into my hands with an article on Freethinkers and *Esprits*



*forts.* I asked my uncle what sort of people they were. He laughed and said: "Don't read all the stuff you meet with." Still, although I did not understand much about it, my thoughts were turned to something that was unknown to me. Indeed, when I heard in the confirmation lesson how the pastor assailed unbelievers and atheists who were sure to go to Hell, I thought of my father and my uncle with a stab of pain. I loved both, they were so good. Would they be damned?

At this time the first religious doubt entered my mind. But if you set a stone rolling, its speed will increase as it rolls.

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My lot was cast, I was not to go to the Grammar School, but to the Teachers' College. If I had not learned by experience, I suppose I should never have had an opinion on the education of elementary school-teachers. I should like to know what people imagine a teachers' seminary to be. Have they a conception of the spirit which rules there? But I will not speak of the people; I should only like to know whether those who stand for progress, those who make their mark in science, art and politics, have an idea what the actual training of an elementary teacher is? Perhaps I expect too much; perhaps the spiritual standard of the majority is too low, and their interest in the education of the people on the whole slight. But if they feel the need for striving and struggling in the cause of progress, then I ask: "Is there no

one among influential men who, at the end of the nineteenth century, will insist upon the reform of the teachers' colleges, or do our parliaments meet for no purpose but to discuss taxes and military budgets? I fear that it is with politicians as with men of science—they have lost touch with life. At first they are in sympathy with it; many creep up step by step grovelling; but when the goal is once reached, and the obscure man has gained honours and titles, then he concerns himself only with his own interests, carries his head high, and looks down upon life. Thus people act with regard to the teaching profession. For hundreds it suffices if it helps them to a government office, to the professor's chair, to Parliament; but then it is "Good-bye, teaching and life! I am provided for. Those poor wretches, the teachers, must shift for themselves as best they can." If we only had more really cultured men, sturdy natures of the type of Diesterweg, the reform would long ago have been a subject of serious consideration. As it is they say: "What are trifles to me?" So the trifle remains: but it is no trifle, the training of teachers belongs to the Alpha and Omega of a new epoch. Without a thorough reform of the teachers' colleges, without a thorough training of the teachers of the elementary schools, a new era is inconceivable. The wise may write learned books; naturalists and artists may bring new things before the world, and make themselves known in museums, exhibitions, and galleries; poets and thinkers may usher in the new era, and socialists may found societies and newspapers—yet much will remain as it has been hitherto. We need a new body of teachers; without them there can be no new

race. It is very remarkable that our times, which are for revolutionising every thing, should care so little for the elementary schools and those carrying them on; even the world of teachers is for the greater part opposed to school reform. They are dependent here upon the Church, there upon the government; and when an independent-minded teacher makes his appearance, one can be sure that he will be pushed to the wall and be left out in the cold by the majority; not only by the obscurantists and narrow-minded, but also by men of intelligence.

In the eyes of the majority of the so-called cultured classes, the schoolmaster is a cipher, a makeshift, but half-educated; a comic figure like the apothecary of old, who has no place in the parish council, in the Diet, or in Parliament.

“He is to carry on his schoolmastering quietly, and is to keep modestly in the background,” say those who often have risen only through his help. “He must not meddle with politics,” says the government; and “Woe to him if he dare to be a freethinker,” says the Church. No teacher can venture to declare himself an unbeliever or a democrat, and if he work as such for the people and for his fellow teachers, he soon recognises that they will have nothing to say to him. And yet the teaching profession has done great things; it has grown strong enough to make something of itself, and is again beginning to agitate for the reform of the Teachers’ colleges; and that is the best thing it can at present do, for the future of the profession.

I know the spirit of these colleges from experience. It is the spirit of theology in spite of Falck

and Diesterweg. Whosoever finds his way into a teachers' seminary will be intellectually stunted, for the seminary is antiquated. Mountain-high roll the waves of our time; a Lessing and a Schiller have dedicated their lives to the free spirit of mankind; but the Teachers' colleges have profited nothing; they go on their way in the old rut, or in a by-path. Is it not strange? And these colleges educate the teachers of the people, the men who in their time are to serve their generation.

The elementary teachers ought themselves to be lights, instead of which they are made use of to extend the light of others. Of course, the fault does not lie with the teachers, but with those who make the laws, and ought to care for the tone of the Colleges. Whoso studies the spirit of Frederic the Great, and sees how things look in the Teachers' colleges after a hundred years, must needs be greatly astonished. Woe to the teacher who has made his own the views of a Frederic, a Goethe, a Feuerbach, and who ventures to express them to-day! For the spirit of freedom is wanting, everything is wanting.

I have tasted of the spirit of the Teachers' college, and have freed myself from it. Wherever I find slavish dependence, and must think and feel to order, I break through the barriers, I flee from bondage. I must be free and feel myself a human being.

I was not free in the Teachers' college, and could not feel myself a human being. Although but a boy of fourteen, thoughts about my mistaken education came, so to speak, daily into my mind. The first years were bearable; I did not live in the college, and that was somewhat more human. At any rate,

I was not obliged to live in those barracks, where you have to eat and sleep to order. I lived with one schoolfellow in the house of an excellent spinster, Fräulein Anna Sjebelis, the daughter of a gymnasium director, and attended classes at the Teachers' college. The lady was most kind to us; she cared for us lads committed to her charge like a mother, and therefore I willingly undertook to read prayers and hymns, morning and evening. Sometimes I wanted to shirk the duty, but did not succeed. "You read so well," she would say, and pressed me to do it again. Not that I undervalued religious forms, but it went against me to read prayers aloud; I wanted to pray alone in my chamber, as I had hitherto done. But the religious instruction was absolutely unpleasing to me. We were stuffed with it, as geese with dumplings when fattening; portions of the Catechism, verses of hymns, Old and New Testament, there was no end to it. Hundreds of texts had to be learned by heart, drummed into us word for word, and alas for him who did not know them! I suffered tortures during that time; I had no difficulty in learning the biblical wisdom, but I was often not able to repeat word for word to the teacher that which I could say quite easily at home. When I stood before him, and he laid his finger on his lips to ensure silence, I forgot from sheer terror what I had learnt, and the consequences were a scolding, a bad mark, being kept in after lesson-time, and a visit to the teacher of theology, in order to say to him the texts and Bible-stories. Not seldom it happened that I cried or did not go out all day, in order to learn it by heart. "Go for a little walk, it is better for

you, you will learn all the better afterwards," said the faithful soul, my school-mother, but I could not often make up my mind to obey her ; I was afraid of more punishment, more blame, more keeping-in ; I lived in fear and trembling. What oppressed me most was the fact that, although industrious, I was counted lazy, refractory, or stupid. Do what I would I never overcame my dread of the school and the masters. And yet the teacher of "Religion" in my first years was a very kind man ; indeed, he was afterwards one of the few in the whole college whom I could respect and love. The fault was neither his nor mine ; what they wanted was to ground us thoroughly in the first stages of theological knowledge. Thus we were compelled to spend our time on doctrine which had no sense outside the church. The education was for the church, and led to pietism. Meanwhile two of the best years of boyhood were utterly wasted, and I had learnt nothing that would be of use to me in life ; one thing only had I gained, the right to be taken into the Teachers' college as a boarder, which I had to submit to in spite of all resistance. So I gave up my little family life, and moved into the great barracks which, shut off from the world, was yet supposed to fit one for it.

I can truly say that I became more depressed with each week that passed. It went against my nature to be treated roughly like a soldier, and I suffered still more from the instruction.

I never had any time to myself ; I was part of a machine which worked from morning to night, and carried every one along with it. When I was not

in class, or at the organ, or in the room for violin-practice, I was working in a comfortless study with a dozen other schoolfellows of various ages. There we sat on rough, wooden chairs and wrote at green tables, and learned, and learned, and when it became dark the gas was lighted, the burners having globes, but often no shades. It never seemed to enter any one's head that the eyesight of many of us was thus ruined. The machine went on working ; even when we wished to leave the room, we had to mark it on the blackboard. Thus it went on, day by day. Early in the morning the bell rang, and we hurried down from our attic to the ground-floor to wash in cold water—many had no soap—and from the washing-room we ran to the study, and soon afterwards to the hall for prayers. Mid-day and evening the bell sounded for the common meals ; the tables were innocent of table-cloths, and we ate from pewter plates, and before nightfall we hurried again into the hall for prayers. The organ sounded, we sang and prayed, and the wags played tricks. At last we went up to our attic, and any one who enjoyed sound sleep got it in spite of a noisy party with its anecdotes and jokes.

Family life was at an end, and a life of barracks and cloister began. But there was method in it all. Habit is good, good for church and state ; one became ever more estranged from society, and ever more surely all mental impulse became nipped in the bud. The Teachers' college was like a forest, in which the buds are destroyed, that the trees may not grow too large. But every thing unnatural revenges itself, the systematic suppression of the human being, first of

all; either he becomes a double-dealer and a hypocrite, who is good for nothing, or else he breaks loose, and becomes a fighter for freedom and humanity.

The machine-like life of the Teachers' college seemed to have little effect on the well-being of most. For one thing, there are not many who dislike to be parts of a machine; and some 95 per cent. of the pupils belonged to the lower classes. The son of a peasant, a linen weaver, an artisan, a postman, a small tradesman, will take the privation of home-life ten times as easily as a child of good family, who has been brought up in quite a different atmosphere. I who had enjoyed a better home life, felt the College to be intolerable. I was dissatisfied with everything; I felt myself a slave and was ashamed to acknowledge it. I had friends, even a brother in the gymnasium, and met them in their free time, and though I did not like the classical teaching, I would willingly have had three times as much if I could only have been free from restraint. There were times when, being at a distance from the town, I felt as if I could not go back; I would gladly have followed any one who had asked me; no privation could have been greater than the loss of a natural life. At college I felt like a dog in a kennel, with a chain he is not used to.

But I had to make the best of a bad business as long as ever I could. Sometimes things were better for a time, then again not so. My affection for my parents was too great for me to run away, as I had several times thought of doing.

Was it the wretched food that made me miserable? Well, I would gladly eat dry bread



to-day if it were necessary. Was it lack of amusements? No, I have never in all my life felt the want of them; I do not ask for pleasure. Was it associating with children of the lower classes? Nor that either; I always enjoyed intercourse with the common people.

First and foremost it was the instruction. It might be asked, "What could you understand about teaching at that time?" Impertinent people have said that to me! But, be a schoolboy ever so young and inexperienced, he feels whether he is being taught well, and brought up properly or not. Hundreds of boys have passed through my hands who have thawed under my teaching as the frost melts on the window-pane. It would be sad if one had always to obtain a patent in order to know whether school and teachers were on the right path. What was wrong? The whole and the parts.

Such a Teachers' college rests on the foundation of theology. Most of the teachers were theologians to the backbone, men who dreaded progress and modern modes of thought. They had heard and read of pedagogical science, but were themselves no true pedagogues, that is to say, they were without independence, but were bound to routine. There was a time when theology was holy water. When educational theory, Religious instruction, history of Literature, History proper, Geography, Latin, Mathematics, examination in teaching, German grammar, everything was in the hands of the theologians. This was the state of affairs year after year, and that is called a training-school for the educators of the people. Changes

took place among the teachers as if it were a business house. Young theologians came from the University, and older ones were promoted to better posts, but the headmastership was always in the hands of a theologian, and the influence of the consistory was perceptible. People may talk much, nowadays, about the reform of the Colleges, but it is only a patching-up, which will be replaced by another like it in a few decades. Who are the men who can reform the seminary? Theologians and schoolmasters, who wish free and independent teaching abolished! The blush of dawn is still far, far off. Nothing could have been more mistaken than the underlying pietistic tone of the teaching, by which a young man is constantly made aware to what end everything is tending; when he sees how all-important the "Religious" instruction is made; how the tests in teaching amount to nothing but catechising and sermonising; to what a narrow range the subjects for the compositions are confined; how natural science is treated as a mere appendage to education, and free thought is oppressed. Can one then wonder that the student becomes one-sided, and when he enters public life loses the feeling for improvement and for thought? Instruction is a failure when it takes the joy out of young life, and that it always does when it rests on a foundation of theology. "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined" is a true saying. I have often observed that even liberal-minded men, when they took up the office of instructor, let themselves be made use of by the church, and at last were contented with their fate. But I must point out

that several of my acquaintances *did* free themselves ; at least gave up their positions as teachers in the elementary schools and servants of the Church. One became a chemist, another a professor, a third a musician, a fourth an officer, and some took up the career of High-school teachers.

In the second place, it was the barrack-life in the Teachers' college which depressed me. It is less unbearable for a young man of twenty to pass his time of military service in a barracks, than for boys and youths, who still need the influence of family life, to be put into a boarding-school. A teacher is to be an educator, therefore he must himself be educated. But a boarding-school, with the organisation of a Training-college, is no place of true education, it lacks the chief foundations of the latter—viz., social life depending upon the humanising intercourse with others, and the direct influence of moral example. To take a boy from his home-life and put him into a barrack-like boarding-school is unnatural. He is entirely thrown upon the companionship of his schoolfellows ; he scarcely comes in contact with the masters except in class ; not only does he lack mental intercourse with mature masculine minds, but also the warm motherly touch which leads him to kindly thought and action. A well brought-up boy cannot feel happy when the natural ties are entirely severed.

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It cannot be my duty to air my views on the reform of the Teachers' college; I should have to write a book; and if I did I should not be heard by those whom the matter concerns.

Even to-day the Teachers' college is an institution in which one learns something of most subjects, but nothing adequately. There are countries, large and small, in which the training of elementary teachers is finished off in a couple of years. Consider this—a boy leaves his village school to go to a Teachers' college, and after four or five years he is to be one of the educators of the nation. The results are self-evident; the extent of this education is a drop in the ocean of the great life of the nation, which requires a comprehensive, practical, and theoretical training and experience. A young teacher is a weak tool, who is pushed to the wall by the Church if he does not find supporters in the community. Even if the Teachers' college had a more liberal foundation, and educated its pupils in accordance with the spirit of the age, there would yet be danger of the teachers' best power being suppressed. As the preparation for their career is so poor, the desire to carry their education farther becomes a necessity for many. No inconsiderable number of them shake the dust from their feet, and leave the profession. Many leave home in order to make their way among strangers, others shun no sacrifice at home that will enable them to reach the portals which lead to culture, freedom, and respected position. From the rank of elementary teachers have emerged pioneers in education, and many were, and are, active as officials, musicians, authors, scholars, chemists, pro-

fessors, etc. etc., and for the honour of elementary teachers, it must be said that many have won for themselves considerable cultivation, and have valuable work to show. If history is silent about them, their deeds influence the world. There are more deserving people without fitting monument than monuments that have been deserved.

My work in the College was entirely one-sided, just like school-life in general. Learning by rote was the chief business—that mechanical learning which comes by hearsay. Individual activity—one's own observation, thought, and judgment; a real individual education by original, artistic, scientific, research and experiment—did not exist. We had our worn-out "manuals"—stayed indoors and worked at books which, of course, were written by people who had enjoyed a like education. As I am one of those who have an unconquerable dislike to book-learning I was not happy, neither could I be commended as a pattern pupil. My natural impulse to prove everything, to learn the nature of things by personal investigation, to get to the bottom of problems in nature and life, could not be satisfied by the traditional life of the College. I was a water-plant without water. Not that I would find fault with all my masters: some were thoroughly good ones; but the whole system was mistaken. I had to learn dreary educational matter, paragraphs, dogmas, axioms, systems, and I worked like an automaton. Thus my mental life was starved; my imagination had no play; time and opportunity to work on my own lines, as I should have liked to do, were lacking. I had not only to work up my school-tasks, but had

also private lessons in classics ; and also for several years worked for myself at Russian and Wendish, for I longed to widen my mental horizon ; it was a necessity to me to look over the hedge of the College. Had I not had a musical gift, and been an enthusiastic lover of nature, I should in all probability be to-day wearing Church fetters as teacher in some village. How I longed for thoughtful books, but I had no time to read. If I thought in the morning that I should be able to take up a philosophical book in the course of the day, when the evening was come I found I had to leave it to the morrow. It was quite out of the question to attack any subject thoroughly, because I never had time ; I was always hoping to carry on my natural history studies more seriously, but in vain. I longed like a child to possess a microscope and a chemical laboratory, but wishing did not bring them, and I continued to be a machine in the service of routine and word of command. I wished to enter more deeply into things, to rise above mere school cram, and hoped that a happy chance would bring me release. I worked from sheer compulsion, longing to escape into freer life, should the opportunity occur.

I had endured this for three years. "One more year as a boarder," I said, "and I shall die." So I gained my point of being a day-scholar for the last year. This was not much, but it was something. I had intercourse with pupils of the gymnasium, especially with a gentleman who, at thirty years of age, had resolved to pass the leaving examination of the gymnasium. We taught and helped one another. It was a delightful life of work ; this man, who had

been an officer in the army, was not without influence upon me. I found in him one who wished as I did to raise and improve himself, and I learnt something about life which the Teachers' college could not teach. I was often troubled by doubts, but the sight of my landlady's exertions—a poor widow, who had to bring up a number of children as best she could—had an influence upon me. I saw her struggle, and it inspired me with fresh courage to press on towards my goal.

It was at this time that I began to think about improved methods of instruction. The instruction in practical teaching that I had in the College was mere form. I had now to coach a young fellow who went to the gymnasium, in mathematics. My task was to bring him in a short time up to the standard of his class. As he had no conception of the first notions of mathematics, I tried a method based on observation, which, as I saw later, was similar to that of Fröbel and Beust. The result of this experiment gave me such a love for independent teaching, that I may say those private hours laid the foundation of my future work. I was startled to find that a boy who, at school understood nothing, could become with individual treatment quite a passable scholar. Success seemed to be due solely to my having deduced the fundamental principles of mathematics from actual examining of sensible objects; a method which I have since then developed into a combination of mathematics and natural science. It was the first time that I had entered the sphere of individual teaching, and I acquired such a taste for it that I cannot do without it now, in spite of a very extensive literary activity.

Another apparently insignificant circumstance was of moment to me. The deceased husband of my landlady had been a land surveyor, and thus instruments and helps to measurement came into my hands.

Some teachers may wish to know whether I gave myself up at that time to the reading of sceptical works. No, I did not read a single one. I heard, indeed, of the atheists and of the damned, the works of the devil, etc., but not one of them ever fell into my hands. I submitted to the usual attendance at prayers and at church, as long as I was obliged to do so, although my belief had become very shaky. Now and then I was troubled by doubts, but they were soon succeeded by quieter thoughts, till I was once more filled with rage and cursed the whole College life. My consolation lay in the future, wherein I hoped for freedom. So time went on, and, contrary to my nature, I became full of reserve. Now that I have left my College days behind me I judge many things more leniently, but never shall I advocate education in a barracks. Either the training of an elementary-school teacher must answer to modern requirements, or the hope of giving the life of the people a natural foundation must be abandoned. Boarding-schools of this description are worse than barracks. And why? Because even proper feeding of the pupils is neglected, without which education comes to nothing. A soldier is no boy, he is physically mature, and not mentally strained; whereas boys from fourteen until twenty years of age, who are at the period of most rapid growth, should have the best of



food. Unfortunately this is neglected, especially in Germany, where the rule is to learn until heads are like to split, while physical care of the boys is regarded as an unimportant appendage to education. When the young are insufficiently nourished, one need not expect intellectual development; where there is no matter there is no force. It is not unusual to find elementary-school teachers weaklings, and very many on that account succumb to the conditions of their calling. All the more ought the Teachers' college, as long as it is a place of residence, to consider bodily development as a matter of the very first importance. Realise what we paid: a pupil cost 40 thalers (£6) many only 30 (£4 10s.). Such an institution, even if it has command of money, cannot provide adequate bodily care. And add to this, inadequate supervision, inadequate in so far that no one took the trouble to see that each boy ate properly. We attacked our food like ostriches, which method of eating obviously demands the digestive organs of an ostrich. The consequence is a weak digestion, which becomes a burden to many until the end of their lives. If the State establishes boarding-schools, it should also be held responsible for the whole education. And consider this: we had to sign a bond, in which we pledged ourselves to pay a sum of money, as compensation for benefits received, if before the expiration of two years' teaching we wished to leave the profession. The idea of a school-boy signing a bond! It should be the business of Parliament to repeal this immorality, which has been made law. And this peculiarity is not at all rare; I need only mention

the cadet-schools. A mere boy is sent to such an institution, and because he has been the recipient of "benefits," he must pledge himself in writing to so many years of military service. He may be the most unhappy being in the world, but he must endure; he has been caught like a bird in a net. I once saw, in the station at Appenweier, a young non-commissioned officer shoot himself with his musket. Evidence proved that he had broken down under the strain of this obligation imposed upon minors. And this in the land of thinkers and poets, who sing the praises of freedom!

The free spirit of man has to be fettered; this is endured at the present day as in the past. Capable as some of my teachers were, not one of them was for me an enlightening influence; no one would have been permitted to attempt this; had he done so he would soon have been shown his mistake.

Thinking was just as much forbidden in the town; even independent men were afraid to speak out openly. This I often found. For instance, once when I was consulting a doctor, he asked: "What do you do at the Teachers' college?" I told him the state of things, and how unhappy I felt. "My dear fellow," he exclaimed, "so it has been in the past, and so it will be for a long time to come. Everything—religion, one's calling, patriotism, is a matter of business. Do you understand me?" I thought I did not understand him. "Even I must beware of speaking too freely," he said, "I got into hot water once through a lecture. The whole town talked of it. And why? Good heavens! I only said what I thought about the State and the school."

"But are you not an independent man?" I asked him. "Independent?" he replied, smiling. "Who is independent? Those, who have plenty of money, and even they, are afraid. Whoever wishes to express an opinion must have money and courage, and other things besides. We live in times when people bolt their opinions with fear and trembling, so that at last one does not know which is one's own opinion and which somebody else's. The world moves on at a snail's pace." And this was one of the professional men who are envied their free position!

The son must become that which his father wills, and woe to the daughter who does not marry according to her parents' wishes! Life was mechanical; the right of conviction had to be fought for in writing. I have oftener met with free opinions in unexpected quarters than where, with much talk of freedom, nothing is done. For instance, I was once at the house of a Protestant lady, who was to be seen at church every Sunday.

"I go regularly to church," she said, "but our church is rather too cold." "Why?" I inquired. "It is the sermons," she replied, "we have no good preaching. With us the sermon is everything, and because it is generally bad, everything is bad. But I beg you," she added to her outpourings, "do not repeat my remarks, I receive a small pension and must be discreet."

It might seem strange that I, who had been brought up in the atmosphere of a Church school, should arrive at freer views. I came to them neither through social intercourse nor through reading. My circle of acquaintances was very limited, I was

generally left to myself, and for want of time I had few opportunities of reading and no access to liberal literature. But man has a light in himself, and when it is under continuous suppression in a dull and dead atmosphere, a tension is created which at last makes a way for itself. By the workings of my own mind, if slowly—surely—I arrived at conclusions which many find ready-made in books. I was not at all fortunate in my reading, but in my own occupations I was, especially in the study of nature. There I was as lively as a cricket, but among my school-books, on the contrary, like a bird snared on the lime-twig. Even in music, which I cultivated with pleasure, I felt myself moved to original composition.

In the Teachers' college I was not what one calls a favourite pupil. I did much with repugnance, therefore I had not exactly a reputation for industry. I was often dispirited for a while through want of confidence in particular masters who had not treated me justly, and sometimes my feelings sought relief in an unseemly outburst. Still, I found in the staff of masters some who were kindly disposed. One of them, who in class used to call me Napoleon, caught me out of doors when I ought to have been at home. "What are you doing so late by the river?" he asked. "Do you know that I could spoil your final report?" And he informed me that I was out of favour with some of the masters. I had doubtless often made myself unpleasant to them. For instance, the literature master, also a theologian, used to give dictation lessons, the origin of which was long a puzzle to me. At last I discovered the source at a

second-hand bookstall. I bought the book, a cheap history of literature, and dictated out of it to the class before the lesson began. The excitement was not small, for the class saw that what he taught as his own was only borrowed wisdom. Of course, I had to suffer for the joke. Another time I put the gymnastic master in a rage by interrupting his lesson with a question he could not answer, so that without intending it I made a new enemy.

My worst experience was with the headmaster. The occasion was the following: I had to take a message to an hotel, which we were forbidden to enter. As I was coming away, I fell into the hands of the headmaster, who was very angry. My protestations were unavailing, and thus a misunderstanding arose which caused me many trying hours. I was treated like one who is suspected of secret wrongdoing. In reality I was neither drinker nor gambler, but an innocent youth who lacked caution, because he had always expected a fair judgment on the part of others. When people are obliged to dissemble they get into the way of suspecting their fellow men. This is the case even in science; the professionals fall upon non-professionals; the latter must be left out in the cold.

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Life in the Teachers' college was at an end. How often had I longed for this moment! Now it was come. But life is after all a torture-chamber, into which a cheering sunbeam falls but now and then.

My holidays were painful enough. Upon my return home I found my father on his deathbed. All the doctors' skill was in vain. He sank under terrible sufferings and I followed the call of duty. I had been appointed to an assistant-mastership at Taubenheim, in Lusatia, so I set out upon my way. I had never heard of this village on the Bohemian frontier; but on the way an engineer remarked to me: "Well, you are going into a lovely district! A man who can stand life there is born for the lower regions."

What was I to do? I had to obey orders. And why? Because I had received "benefits," and the authorities settled the fate of those who bound themselves by signing their names. I continued my journey until, towards evening, I reached the villages neighbouring on Taubenheim, through which I walked like a travelling journeyman. The villages were leagues long, the end of one reaching to the beginning of the next; everywhere the monotonous whir of the looms and, moreover, wretched scenes in the streets, evidences of grinding poverty. I walked on, full of expectation, as only a young man can be who makes his first step into the world. At last I was in Taubenheim. It was more desolate-looking than any village through which I had passed. I saw the church, and looked around in vain for a building which might be the school-house.

"Where is the school?" I asked a boy. "There it is; go along there." A sigh escaped me. I entered the house, which looked like a weaving-shed, and might just as well have been a workhouse. I introduced myself to a woman whom I met, and

soon I was welcomed by the choirmaster. His reception was hearty. "Things don't look very flourishing with us," he said; "the village is poor, very poor. You can devote yourself all the more to your calling." And he told me one thing and another. "I will take you to the pastor at once," he said, "but first I must show you your room. Do not be alarmed; only you are not very lucky in your first place." It was pitiful. I mounted a steep wooden staircase, past low, dark class-rooms, and then under the roof, by lumber, and linen hung up to dry. At last I was in my little room, and a sigh escaped me. A bed, too short for me—like the room, which I could not enter without stooping—and nothing else but a wretched wooden table and a single chair. No idea of bureau, wardrobe, or clothes-hooks. My only comfort was that my window looked out upon meadows and woods, and admitted the sunshine. The choirmaster left me alone.

"This is a nice dwelling-place for an educator of the people," I said to myself. "Is the teacher a piece of furniture, and does the State, which has so much to say in the colleges about the sublime calling of a teacher, wish seriously for the elevation of the masses?" I felt crushed. I went into the attic-space under the roof and found myself near a pigeon-house and amongst a legion of cobwebs. I went into the schoolroom and could not believe my eyes. "Hopeless!" I said; "this atmosphere, these forms, this smell of poverty! Instead of windows, peep-holes without curtains; above all, no teaching-apparatus, nothing that I had dreamt of, everything bare and dead, a perfect den!" Thus did I medi-

tate, and I went downstairs to go to the pastor's with the choirmaster,—like one stunned.

The pastor was a bachelor. In his house lived a housekeeper with her daughter, and a boy who was a relation of his. The choirmaster left us after he had introduced me to the pastor.

"You have here a wide sphere of usefulness," said he, looking at me through his gold-rimmed spectacles. "Our community is poor, very poor, but the Lord can do much; He has richly blessed us. The point is to bring up the dear young people in Christian discipline and behaviour, and to impress upon them that the kingdom of heaven is for the poor. To-morrow at eight o'clock I will introduce you to your office."

I asked whether he would be willing to give me classical instruction, as I wished to pursue my education. "With pleasure," he said, letting me stand during the interview, "if it is not for more than two hours a week. Perhaps you will give my nephew private lessons in return; he is to go to a commercial school." I was glad to hear this, and expressed my pleasure.

"Are you musical?" he inquired. I said, "Yes." "Ah, that is delightful; I am passionately fond of music. Perhaps we can meet sometimes in the evenings in my room." I had my forebodings at this proposal, but agreed to it. "As you are musical," he said, "you will sometimes conduct the music at the church services; you will like that." This expectation was very unwelcome. I wished to keep free from all such ties; and as I believed that the pastor wanted by these means to bring me under



the coercion of the Church, I replied that I could scarcely hope to have time to spare, because I wished to do much for the school, and to work at my own studies.

He seemed to see through my remarks. "Well, as it is you will have to go to church," he rejoined, "so it would not take more of your time." I felt bound to tell him that I should not go every Sunday. "Sunday is my only free day," I answered, "and I need a great deal of exercise in the open air." The pastor could not doubt this, for I was pale and over-worked. So I took leave of him, and the next morning had the pleasure of being installed in the school by him.

"Feed my lambs" was the subject which he had chosen for his address. It was full of texts and did not make the least impression upon me. My ideas of what training of the human being means, were very different to those held by the Church under State protection. At last, after a prayer, he put the class into my hands and left us alone.

My hopes melted away like wax. I had to teach some sixty boys and girls in a small room. Poverty was so deeply stamped on most of their faces that my heart ached; indeed, some of the children were so neglected that I took them up to my attic-room and cleaned them. During these operations, undreamt-of revelations came to me of the home-life of these beings, whose parents, themselves neglected, did not trouble themselves about the children whom they had brought into the world. I soon saw that I must give up my ideas of educating the young through nature; every sort of appliance

was wanting, there was not even a blackboard. The work consisted in pouring religious matters into their heads, with reading, writing, and arithmetic, so far as this could be done mechanically. I felt as if I were in a workhouse school, and saw that I must take up the duties of a teacher of pauper children.

Whose fault was it? Certainly not that of the teachers, for they groaned themselves at the depressing condition of things. Was it the fault of the community, who had had the pietistic parson forced on them? Certainly not: they were all poor; there was not a rich man in the place. The fault lay with Government, which could raise money for everything except schools and schoolmasters, and which needs the support of the Church, to whose tender mercies the school is therefore left.

World-forsaken, far from any town, without a library, with no social intercourse, and poor as a church mouse, I lived in that world-forgotten place. My income amounted to 240 thalers per annum (£36); so that I had two marks (shillings) a day. But this was not all: I could scarcely find where to get my dinner. There was only a common public-house in the place, so there was nothing for it but to dine there. It was a dirty establishment. I sat in the bar parlour, in which the maid prepared the pig-wash, and took my meals at a bare table, often side by side with pedlars and journeymen. To-day salt meat and sauerkraut, and to-morrow sauerkraut and salt meat. Sunday was a day of luxury, then there was roast veal with red cabbage. And yet I had to consider myself fortunate in having this public-house to resort to, for I was only allowed to

dine there as a favour, because I was the "Herr Lehrer!" Of course the people were generally working in the fields, often from early till late, or had to tend their cattle. And what educated man would wander to that isolated spot?

So I took to having my meals in my attic. I got myself a dog, tamed birds, fed spiders, and brought back from my walks whatever might be of use in the school, or for my own study. It became ever clearer to me that I was no freer here than in the Teacher's college. My days were spent in the dull school-room, and my evenings alone. I was not entirely without social intercourse, however. I made friends with my colleagues, and strolled with them sometimes over the frontier in order to drink a glass of beer in Bohemia. But as I was no card-player, and did not care for long sittings, I generally went home before long, and often worked far into the night. And for what end? In order to prepare for examinations, without which no mortal can prosper.

At first I thought that I should be able to endure Taubenheim for the two years during which the authorities had a hold on me. I made every effort to adapt myself to circumstances. "I must make it do," I said, when once again I was sick to death of the whole business. And for a time at least I did endure it. But soon more serious difficulties arose.

First of all, my Latin lessons became more and more irregular, although I paid for them twice over by regular lessons. The future commercial scholar came four times a week to me, though I went less and less frequently to the pastor. "Something has

again arisen that will prevent our having a lesson," he used to say ; "but, we can make it up afterwards." Accustomed to obey, I did my duty, and hoped for better times.

But there was something else which forced me into seclusion. I soon discovered that it was dangerous to do anything worth doing, for the community or for the school. The choirmaster, Klein, I soon noticed, had fallen out with the teacher Grossmann ; and they only avoided open hostilities on account of the people. Klein was conductor of a choral society, of which Grossmann had been a member, but left it and started another society of his own. Both courted my help, so I learnt to know them both better, for I had no quarrel with either of them ; and as both societies needed support, I supported both. I wanted to start a " Mutual Improvement Society," but was told that it would not do, that it would be a *fiasco*, etc. etc. "The pastor will not approve of it," said the choirmaster ; "he will not suffer such a society to be formed, and I, as choirmaster, could not belong to it ; church and school must go hand in hand." My colleague, Grossmann, who was in many ways more liberal, refused to have anything to do with it, because he must avoid everything that would bring him into conflict with the choirmaster. "I have had a great deal to put up with already," he said, "and I must not risk further complications." And when I discussed it with influential members of the community, who hated the pastor, they refused their support, through fear of him. So I found that my plan was of no avail. I saw that a community, small though it be, may be full of

disagreements and narrow-minded prejudice. They did not want anything new, and shrank timidly from all that tended towards freedom. One was dependent upon the other, the school upon the church ; and the community was so accustomed to the leading-strings of the church, that any innovation was synonymous with revolution.

"You wish to form a 'Mutual Improvement Society,' said the pastor. "What do you mean to do in it?" "What is generally done in societies of this description," I replied. "Our school is so inadequate that I think it would be useful to instruct the adults as well as the elder scholars, on nature, agriculture, family life, the school, etc." The pastor smiled. "My dear sir," he said, "our community is not suited for such attempts at enlightenment. One cannot give a village new soil or new occupations ; everything depends upon the local circumstances. And do you know that you are running risks, great risks ?"

"How so ?" I inquired, with surprise. "Well, I will tell you," he rejoined impressively. "The State must always take care that the minds of its citizens are not filled with unsuitable ideas. When even teachers, whose vocation is only in the school, make such attempts, they run the risk of ruining their future career, of laying their all at stake."

This was new to me. "I am not thinking of my future," I rejoined ; "and should I not be able to earn my bread as an elementary school teacher, I hope to earn it as something else, and perhaps better than I do now. You are aware how much I am earning !"

"Do not forget," he returned, "that you have

another teacher's examination before you; so be prudent, I advise you, in all seriousness." I found myself obliged to abandon my project. Discouraged by this failure, I determined to go less often to church, and not to become too intimate with the choirmaster and my colleague Grossmann, or any one else. I threw myself into my studies, did my duty in the school, and was otherwise about as lonely as a man could be.

It was at that time that I made my first attempt at writing. I had the opportunity of studying the life of spiders, which carried on their existence in the roof-space outside my attic. My interest in them was awakened by a little work which had appeared at Frankfort-on-the-Main in 1798. "Araneology, or Natural History of Spiders," was the title of this work, by Quatremer-Disjonval, a member of the former Paris Academy. What I read there seemed to me past all belief; but when on the back of the little secondhand book I saw a note by some unknown hand, that the observations on spiders as weather-prophets were confirmed by Captain von Ochshausen in Basle, I set about putting the matter to proof. Soon I had quite a company of these little creatures in my attic, and was enabled to set on foot observations which partly corroborated what I had read; and which were the means of my gaining fresh information. I became so fond of my objects of study, that I felt less lonely. Unfortunately, the editor of an illustrated paper, to whom I sent my work, took no notice of it, and I have heard no more of it to this day.

Through the study of spiders I was led to interest

myself in the animal world, so that I made excursions, for general observation of nature. But what can a poor teacher do, who has scarcely means to feed and clothe himself? Before the month was out, my money was at an end, and I felt it most humiliating to be obliged to fetch my miserable salary, in small coins, on the first of every month, from the collector of school-fees. There lay the dirty little groats, in rows upon the table, and I counted them over, like a pedlar, and filled my pockets, to get them changed at the little shop. This is how the elementary teacher is treated, and yet he is expected to be carried away by feelings of enthusiasm. O, life is a comedy, in which those who devote themselves to raising up the nation figure as marionettes. It is shameful that such a condition of things should still be endured in our day. I call it degrading that the most important co-operators in the elevating of the masses should be treated as day-labourers.

The schoolmaster is the last to have his salary raised; even university professors, themselves teachers, are seldom able to understand the worth of an elementary schoolmaster. Military officers, professors, and State officials must be duly provided for first; and if ever the elementary school-teacher is thought of, then it is said that there is no more money to dispose of.

Is the education of the people a luxury? Where is the labourer who complains when he has to spend a few pence on his child? I have not yet come across one. Even the poorest labourer and farm-servant has something to spare for his child's advancement. The officials throw dust in the eyes of the

public, when they assert that the "people" will spend nothing on schools. The people are willing to pay, but while they have to sacrifice enormous sums on militarism, their means are exhausted. Reverse the order of things, and it will be seen whether the nation is against the education of its children—its hearts' blood! The nations are still in thick darkness, so that one looks in vain for the dawn.

It was a sad time when the educators of the nation had to exist on two marks a day; nowadays a *coiffeur* expects half as much for his twenty minutes' work, and a cutter of corns likewise. I had only myself to care for, but think of teachers' families, many of whom have to subsist on three marks a day. A shoeblack is better off.

As I felt unhappy, and was overworked by school-business which took me into the homes of my scholars, I resolved to ask the authorities to remove me to another post. I told them this was necessary if my health was not to be undermined. Help came unexpectedly, but not from those in authority. One day I had a visit from an advocate, who told me that the post of teacher was vacant in the school lately established in the little town of Schirgiswalde. "As we have heard that you understand how to deal with children," he said, "we wish to appoint you without delay, as the matter is urgent. I will be responsible for the sanction of the authorities." I knew, at any rate, the neighbourhood of the little town, and I liked it. "You will live in a palace!" he said jokingly, "and will feel yourself in heaven, so make up your mind and be reasonable." I consented. Scarcely a week passed before I received an invitation to pay



my respects to the pastor. This introduction secured my promotion.

The only grief I had to bear before my departure was the death of a pet jackdaw, which I had reared. I was, myself, to blame for the misfortune. I had been painting, and had not locked up the colours which I had mixed. My bird, which pecked at everything it came across, had eaten up the paint. When I came home he was drooping in a corner. All attempts to save him were fruitless, so I laid him, who had given me hours of amusement, to rest in a quiet spot of earth.

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I was pledged to stay two years in Schirgiswalde and remained gladly; indeed, at first I felt as if new-born. The lawyer was right; in comparison with my life at Taubenheim I could fancy myself in paradise. The key to the mystery was a simple one—humanity. I had a comfortable dwelling, enjoyed intercourse with cultivated people, and at school with the children, who were few in number, I felt myself a friend and adviser. The boys and girls were well-dressed, clean, and well-mannered, spoke good German, and were forward in their learning. Besides this, there was a nice school-room, well-lighted and sunny, and when I asked the managers for little school-appliances I was often listened to. I was delighted, and set myself with enthusiasm to work for education. Before long I had gained the affection of the children. A girl brought me

the first cherries and a bouquet of garden flowers ; a comical little lad obediently delivered a polite message from his aunt. In time, when I grew cheerful, I said to myself : " Give up all plans for the future and live for this school. Every employment has its limits."

My work as teacher was refreshing ; but, alas ! my examination weighed more heavily upon me than I had expected, so that I had little leisure for independent pursuits. The dependence on others, into which I had been systematically led, was so great that but for the influence of open-minded people I should have come slowly to self-knowledge. As it was, a long time passed before the lawyer, on whose flat I lived, opened his heart to me (I had been acquainted with his biting wit from the first day).

I was aware that he did not go to church, but not that he was a black sheep in the community. Once a week we walked to a lovely valley in which the clatter of mills was heard, and good beer was to be had. We often sat for three hours in the back-room at " Mother Gröschel's," quenching our thirst and refreshing our spirits. I often laughed until I cried at the dry epigrams which he uttered from his snug corner. Once, when we were again on our way to Mother Gröschel's, he said :

" You must be on your guard with the parsons !"

" What brings you to this subject ?" I asked in surprise.

" Master Haufe, be cautious ! You have the devil in you, and he will come out some day !"

Still I did not understand what he was driving at.

" The moral of it is, that one can't escape with a

whole skin unless one makes use of it. There is a crucifix in front of our school. When there is a church-procession that is one of the central points. Soon after I came here there was a procession, and I watched it from my open window, comfortably smoking my cigar and meditating on the heathenish spectacle. Imagine what the consequence was! One day I get a summons for spitting upon procession and crucifix!"

"Had you done so?" I inquired, filled with amazement.

"No such thing! But the outcome was a trial, and I was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. What do you say to that?"

I could make nothing of it; but I could not help laughing when I looked into my friend's droll face. At last he laughed, too, but soon became grave again. "Be careful," he said, "I was only saved from ruin by a petition for grace, and the help of influential friends." And then he told me occurrences in this little town of mixed religions, which made my hair stand on end.

Our conversation had its good effect. The more I took note of the practical working of church morals, the more uneasy I felt. Once, when a child from my school had fought with one of the other school about heresy, it appeared to me as shocking as theft and robbery. Then I came more and more to the conviction that I could get nothing towards a truly free and moral training out of the stereotyped lesson-books. I knew but too well the style of creed-bound science and education which, from the first, leave one no time for thought and self-

knowledge. But it was just this which opened my eyes; I began to know what was good and what bad.

One day when I met some engineers engaged on the new line, and we chatted about social questions, one of them said: "The railways are the best means of improvement. We engineers are the pioneers of culture!"

"But you can only make railways where you are sent!" I replied.

"That is so, but our work serves the time. We work with the spirit of the age. When we have finished, and the first engine whistles, there blows a new wind, the priests have to pass into a siding, and the school becomes freer. The parents wish it to be so; they see that progress is a law of nature."

"It would be well if it were so," I said, "but what you have stated seems only half true."

"Well, what do you think of the schools? Do they serve the needs of the present age? Are you allowed to teach what is true? Nothing of the sort. You have to teach as Church and State order. Without these you cannot give the young a farthing-candle's power of light!"

"I know that we teachers are slaves," I rejoined; "but who will set us free, so that we may bring up human beings? Not the Church; not the State; nobody; so we must help ourselves. It is sad that it should be so."

"Do you know Büchner's 'Kraft and Stoff' (Force and Matter)?" he asked, coming nearer to me.

"No."

"You do not know the book!" he cried, astonished.

“ Ah, that is the book for teachers, a veritable beacon-light. Every one ought to possess it ; then, by-and-bye, day would dawn ! ”

The conversation was not without results. In a few days I possessed the book. I locked it up in my cupboard, for I was daily expecting a visit from the inspector. Then, one sunny afternoon, I went to the orchard and lay down under a pear-tree, where scarcely the twitter of a bird disturbed me, and I could read and think in peace. I read with emotion ; and I often said to myself, “ You have thought that yourself before now ! ” Soon I came upon a new thought, and it seemed to me as if the sun were rising. Before long I was plunged in deep thought. One thing troubled me ; a wonderful pile of thought seemed built upon a supposition. I laid the book aside, and began anew to reflect until I was tired, and put the book away in my pocket in order to continue my reading at night. Büchner’s work did not always satisfy me ; indeed, sometimes I felt inclined to discuss a point with the author. However, the further I penetrated into the region of his thought, the more clear and lasting was the effect upon me ; indeed, soon it was to me a heaven-sent gift. I felt like a child that has to cross a dangerous bridge, and is suddenly carried over to the other side by a man. “ Force and Matter ” was my first free-thinking book. After that, I knew that I was no longer alone. The sense of support overcame my restlessness. I felt freer, and a feeling of pride filled my breast. “ All or nothing ! ” I thought. I took the book with me to wood and meadow. When I sat in the shade of the fir-trees it

was as if I heard music, as if humanity were being freed from the chains which she has forged for herself. Yet when I tried to picture to myself a renovated race, I came upon a thousand impossibilities, and at night, as I studied my cram-books by lamplight, and thought of the next morning's schoolwork, a gloomy depression came over me.

"Again to-morrow you will teach what you do not believe," I said to myself. And it was so. I taught the Bible-story of the Creation as fact, and spoke of miracle upon miracle when God began to lift fallen humanity on to its feet again. I was terrified at myself; I felt dishonest, like one who acts contrary to his most sacred convictions, and takes money for it. And yet I remained—a *halfer* (*halber*). I could not help it.

I suffered, it is true, under the burden of having to teach "Religion," but on the other hand I had the advantage over many of my colleagues of greater freedom of action. With an unusually small number of pupils, I could give individual attention to each pupil. I knew each one outside and in, and it was no small joy to me to bring a hidden talent to light. When the parents, with whom I used to consult, asked me how their children were getting on, I was, in most cases, able to give information, and I have probably been of use to many fathers and mothers. It was often possible to treat them so individually, that I considered with delight the question of teaching in conformity with nature. If I had carried out my ideas, I should have effected much that people are still vainly trying to accomplish. One point was clear; the instruction must

start from *things*; must be kept *objective*. Therefore I worked, at least as far as lay in my power, by means of real object-lessons, for which I had plenty of material in my collections, and made many things myself out of wood, clay, cardboard, etc. The more I became independent in this direction, the more clearly I saw that there is as great a difference between school and school, between teaching and teaching, as between heaven and earth. It is true that I did not know how to reform the school so as to make it serve the purposes of life, but I sympathised with Pestalozzi, who, from a new system of education, expected a new race of men.

A valuable incitement to thought was given me by interchange of ideas with a young colleague, who felt education to be of the utmost importance, and conversed many an hour with me on improved methods of teaching. The fire of enthusiasm belongs to youth; this I realised more and more; but, at the same time, saw how good it is to listen to the old. Of my elder colleagues I still vividly remember one, a splendid fellow, whom I sometimes met on my rambles.

"Are you really going to leave us?" he inquired once on meeting me at a fence.

"I do not yet know; it will cost me a struggle."

"I hear that you wish to go to the university."

"Certainly, if I go away. But I am quite happy here."

"But I think you ought to go to a city. There are good prospects for young teachers; they become headmasters, directors, possibly school-inspectors,

and members of the school council. Here one remains as one is."

"But I am not suited for life in a large town, I am too fond of nature. And I do not look forward to a career; that is beyond my present ambitions."

"Then why do you wish to go to the university?"

"I wish to penetrate deeper into science. I am longing for thorough study."

"But you mean to work in the teaching line afterwards?"

"I have not yet considered it; in any case, I should like one day to find out a new method of education."

"Do you know," he said kindly, "if such an impulse is in you you ought to satisfy it. Man ought to follow the impulse of his own spirit; it leads him, right or left, in the direction in which he can be true to himself. You are young and strong, why should you spend your life here? I have been buried in this corner of the world for over thirty years, and my children are far away and are a great expense to me. If I were not already an old man I would go away to-day, and begin over again with more wisdom."

"But you would still be a teacher?"

"Certainly, but where there is freedom and money to be got. The worst of it is, that here in the country we are never free. The evil has taken too strong a hold, much too strong."

I was not a little surprised to hear this from the old man, who had never before touched upon the question, and hoped that he would now express his views fully. But he took leave of me, and asked me to call upon



him some time. Nevertheless, his last words had had their effect, and I thought of freedom, school, and the world of teachers.

It was at this time that an acquaintance from the Wendish land visited me unexpectedly. He was on a walking-tour into Bohemia, where I had made excursions as a boy. Our pleasure at meeting was great, and we had much to tell each other.

At last we came to speak about church and school. "Look here," I said to him (he was a young Protestant clergyman, fat and flourishing): "We live here sharply divided from one another; Catholics and Protestants shun each other like cat and dog. Everything is divided, or would like to be; each form of belief wants its own church, its own pastor and teacher, yes, if possible its own doctor and butcher. The Protestant children go to *this* school, the Catholic to *that*, and when they meet they call one another heretic, and come to blows. What becomes of morality? Is that Christian?"

"What is Christian?" he asked, looking at me. "Education should be such that children, let us say, until their twelfth year, should not know what Catholic and Protestant means. That is my opinion, but I can only utter it on the Bohemian frontier." And he smiled.

"Do you believe in a re-union of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism?"

"No," he answered decidedly. "The two religions will never amalgamate. Of course, there will be talk of re-union as long as both grow more and more hostile. All clergymen know that. If it depended upon the men it would be more likely; but the

difficulty lies in the fact that wives and mothers are pious, and that the Church has the education of the young in its hands. The school is dependent upon the Church, and will be so as long as there are churches. The teachers themselves are much too weak to alter anything."

"Does not the Bible say that there will some time be one shepherd and one flock?" I asked.

"I must confess that I can only regard that as a dream," he rejoined. "I am not going to play the prophet, but Catholics and Protestants are so sharp-set against one another that re-union is far less likely than the dissolution of the whole church."

"And what would take its place?" I asked, full of expectation.

"In any case a community of spirit, which is far removed from church bigotry. But it is quite useless to conjecture. I am content simply to act as a liberal clergyman."

"But if you do not believe yourself what you teach?" I cried in astonishment.

My former schoolfellow was silent.

"I cannot ignore my personal conviction much longer," I replied, scanning him from head to foot, for his character was incomprehensible to me. "I am become such a doubter that I often feel myself blushing before my scholars. No, it will not do. I believe that I shall go to the university."

"There you will find fresh toil, fresh conflict, fresh disappointments," he said. "Have you considered all that?"

"At least, I must come to a clear understanding with myself," I answered. And so I often said to

myself. Soon the moment came when I could be a little more open. Once when I was invited by the local school-inspector, our conversation turned upon my future.

"We should be glad for you to stay with us," said he; "it will then be necessary after the second examination to take the oath of service." The pastor fetched a book and read the oath aloud to me.

"Is this oath necessary?"

"Of course, if you wish to remain in office."

"Is not my word sufficient?"

The pastor gazed at me with altered looks and said with slow emphasis: "Are you become an unbeliever?"

"I cannot say that, but I have the conviction that a morally mature person needs only to give his word, and one who is not morally mature should not be forced to take an oath."

"I am quite astonished at your having such ideas," he cried. "The oath is prescribed by law, no one may dispute it. You are very much in error! Strange that you should have come to this opinion."

"It is my conviction," I replied. "I shall do right without compulsion; if I am asked to act contrary to my conviction I simply take back my word, break no oath, and do no one any harm."

"Ah, then, you are on a very independent path," he answered, "and one thing only is possible, you take no oath and simply give up your office."

"If that is so then I will resign it," I replied, "I shall look upon this as deciding me to go to the university."

And with this my future was settled, all unknown

as it lay before me. "Let things turn out as they will," thought I, "an oath I will not take; I must have freedom of action."

It was on a June morning, during the first lesson-hour (being that of religious instruction), that I was honoured with a visit, which is never pleasant to a teacher. The school-inspector, whom I did not at all expect, entered the schoolroom.

"Please to proceed!" said he, looking at the study plan by the door.

The request was not at all welcome to me. As a child I had no interest in religious instruction, and as a teacher it was often embarrassing to me to talk with my little world of pupils about supernatural things as if they were natural. But it was no use, I had to make the plunge.

At last he rose from his chair, made the boys and girls tell him a number of Bible-stories, questioned them on this and that in the Catechism, asked for Bible-texts and verses of hymns, and as my teaching had evidently not pleased him he took up the story, which had been my subject, in order to show me how I ought to have set about it. At first this did not trouble me; I recognised that his way of treating the subject was much cleverer than mine had been. To be sure I soon felt it not quite pleasant to receive such a correction before my pupils. A child is so sensitive a creature that it detects the most hidden "suggestion of reproof." He does not show tact, I thought, and put a good face on the matter.

Before long I had another unpleasant experience. The inspector interrupted my German teaching to

complete the explanation of some obsolete rules of grammar. "He has to command, and I to obey," I thought. But when it came to an object-lesson, I felt that my skill went further than that of my superior, who had probably pursued classical studies but neither attended to the elements of teaching nor made the child's mind the mirror of instruction. What one of my colleagues had once said occurred to me: "We want elementary-school teachers as inspectors!" Yes, an elementary teacher who had grown up into a knowledge of the children's natures would have been ten times more welcome to me.

It was already past the dinner-hour when he called on me to examine the children in geography. "Take Norway!" he said.

"We have not had Norway yet," I replied.

"Then show me how you would set about it."

So I set myself to the task. After a time he said: "Here you have an opportunity of touching on the northern lights."

"Aurora Borealis—geography and a child's understanding"—the thought astounded me. I knew, moreover, that precious little had been discovered by science concerning the northern lights. "That should be treated in the lesson on physics," I returned, for he had put my back up.

"Never mind; please to take it now," he commanded.

"Perhaps, Mr. Inspector would prefer to take the subject himself?" said I, rather shortly. "I observed a slight flush on his face, and an uncomfortable anxiety as to the audacious proposal came over me.

"We will speak of it the next time," he rejoined, looking at his watch, "it is too late now." And he expressed his satisfaction with the children's progress, exhorted them to diligence, and promised an early visit, then a prayer, and all was over.

The inspector invited me to dine with him, and to accompany him part of the way to the neighbouring village, where he had ordered his carriage to wait. I expected a reproof from him every moment on account of the Aurora Borealis business; but he did not say a word about it, nor of the school, nor of my work. As we were walking along the road, after talking about various things, he said smiling: "You seem to have an independent character."

"Independent?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Certainly."

"On the contrary," I replied, "I often say to myself that I ought to come more out of myself into social life or intercourse."

"You are, anyhow, independent in the school," he replied smiling.

"Have I altered anything in the study-plan? I mean with regard to details." And then he communicated to me his observations on the object-lesson which, he thought, confirmed his assertion.

"I think that we teachers ought to have much more freedom," I began, under the impression that our intercourse was unprofessional. "Why do we pass examinations and receive diplomas from the State? Surely in order to prove our efficiency. But it seems that the teacher may not teach in his own way."

"Then there would be chaos!" he cried laughing. "Rules are necessary!"

"But a school is like a family, each has its character," I replied. "One who has shown that he is fit to be a teacher should only be inspected with regard to his faithfulness to duty; for the rest he should act according to his own judgment. Would that be too much freedom?" The school-inspector seemed not to hear. "Theory says, teach individually." I began again, "But if I am to conceal my own pedagogical nature, can I treat the children according to their nature?"

"I have heard," he answered, letting that matter drop, "that you have passed your second examination, and wish to leave this place. Is that your serious intention?"

A light broke upon me. "It will be the only thing for me to do," I replied.

"You do not look far enough," he said kindly. "Do you imagine that you will be excused the oath of office if you have been to the university? Besides, you have taken the oath to the colours, have you not?"

"Certainly, but I would rather have given my word, only; I do not approve of oaths."

"And now you want not to take the oath of office! No, you must consider the matter once more. You are too young; with age, one becomes calmer and more prudent. Tell me," he asked after a pause; "what is your motive in all this?"

"Before now I wished to go to the university," I replied. "Not from dislike to teaching the people; on the contrary, I feel myself to be a born elementary teacher. But I wanted to penetrate to the depths of knowledge. So it came to a struggle with myself.

But there was something else. I found myself in the conflict between faith and knowledge, and now I cannot make up my mind. I have the feeling that I must act quite freely." The school-inspector was silent. "One who is not really convinced of religious truth," I continued, "should not have to teach religion. And remaining here, I suppose, I should always have to do that."

"Highly probable," he answered. "You will certainly not be excused the oath of office, if you wish to be entitled to a pension."

"I see my resignation is a necessity. Much as I regret to do so, I shall tender it by letter. I have spent some happy hours here."

"Every one must judge for himself," he answered, and was silent for a long time. I should have turned back had he not become talkative again. At last, indeed, he told me of an acquaintance who had, like me, given up the teaching profession, only to return to it later. In the back-room at Mother Gröschel's I spent a pleasant hour or two with him. When I accompanied him to the carriage he pressed my hand, and the next day I might have been seen more cheerful than ever in the school, to which I devoted myself up to the last day with heart and soul.

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At last my wish was fulfilled; I was a student, and had come down again from the master's desk to the scholars' bench. As long as I was working for examinations I had not come to myself; now the



channels of free endeavour were unlocked, and I had that of which I had often dreamed. Like a bird I could soar, every stroke of my wings inspired me, so that I believed myself in another world, and heard the songs of liberty which my father had sung. Nothing pained me but that I could not tell him how happy I felt. The change was as great as one feels in nature, when all at once the snow melts and the spring-flowers shoot up. At first I wished to begin my studies at Jena; indeed, my name was all but entered on the university lists; my papers lay already in the office (Easter, 1876), when I received various unpleasant pieces of news. The most unwelcome was, that Ernst Hæckel was absent on a journey of discovery. It is true that I was not acquainted with his chief works, "General Morphology of Organisms," and "Natural History of Creation," but I had read about him, so that I was sorry not to be able to study under him. A North-German, who had come to Jena at that time, in order to hear the educationist Stoy, who was working on Herbart's lines, was astonished that I thought of going away again. "As a schoolmaster you ought certainly to remain here," he said, "Jena is especially excellent for students of education." "I am weary of educational theories," I answered, "and wish now to get a thorough knowledge of science." So I went to Halle, where I was soon entered under Ernst Dümmler, and thanks to the advice of a candidate for the doctor's degree I was soon on the right path to make good progress. "Rise early, do not miss a day, and keep to the plan which I have given you!" said my friend, who was

a nephew of the historian Droysen. And I have often thanked him, for hundreds of students set about things in the wrong way, and lose time and strength through want of system. Thus a stranger, whom I have never seen since, did me an invaluable service. Why is there no committee at the university to help beginners by word and deed? My life soon opened out into work. Social amusements remained unknown to me; time, money, and taste for them were all absent. I was so happy in my work that I never thought of recreation. In my studies I soon recognised two things. First of all the meaning of "mastery in the art of teaching." As a schoolmaster, who had risen from the ranks, I knew well that this mastery is extremely important; but just now, when I had again become a learner, I saw that in it lies the key of education. The amplest teaching material, as I often found, has no attractive power in the hands of defective teachers; whilst a true master knows how to get a many-sided, lively interest out of poor material. More than all else the vivid lectures of Kraus, the botanist, and of Knoblauch, the physicist, helped me.

Julius Kühn, director of the Agricultural Institute, encouraged me to investigate the diseases of plants, and his lectures not only moved me to zealous work, but also set me meditating on a method of instruction, which fills the scholar with enthusiasm. But I also found out that the *centre of gravity* must rest on *nature*. Much as I was delighted, for example, by the finished style of Droysen's lectures, and by the philosopher Erdmann's brilliant eloquence, I could not, after all, devote myself to

history and philosophy. There was a something wanting.

When I went from the philosophic-historical lecture to the mathematical-scientific one, I felt myself at once in a natural atmosphere. The method of individual testing and discovery, the happy mingling of theory and practice, of abstract knowledge and life, was so refreshing that I felt the philosophic or historical works to be poor, dry booklore. I often tried to overcome this impression, but things remained as before. One hour's research in the physical workshop or the chemical laboratory, in the botanical garden or the microscope room, was worth to me a dozen philosophical history lectures. I thought the reason lay in the one-sidedness of my nature, especially because I could see that the abstract sciences were incomparably more thoroughly studied and more highly valued, than were the natural sciences. Philologists, historians, philosophers, and educationists taught the abstract sciences as foundation and superstructure of culture; this fact was obvious in all higher teaching, in ancient and modern literature, and the conversation of learned men. No wonder that students of natural science were looked down upon by the others. But the more I tried to make myself independent in the realm of true reality, the oftener I thought: "*Education must be on a false track.*" For if it is true that knowledge and progress make way but slowly, and that people have only just got so far as to bring the natural sciences into the service of culture, a higher power must belong to them than has hitherto been understood. I applied the test to myself and to my

experience as teacher, and felt the justice of the thought. What can be the reason, I asked myself, that nature is so little regarded as educator, and as a factor in culture? That those who stand up for her are laughed at? In time I thought I had found an answer. I saw the universal importance of a thorough study of nature, which brings about far-reaching alterations in science, art, and literature; in the religious and social spheres. "An education founded on physical science," said I, "must lead to this, that all mental culture will be put upon a basis of fact; and that the conceptions of life and the world will experience such a complete revolution that it is quite explicable why State and Church strain every nerve to avert a downfall of the existing order of things." One who is educated on the basis of objective truth must, sooner or later, free himself with respect to religion from the Church, politically and socially from Government "by the grace of God"; and with respect to pedagogy, from the supremacy of speculative psychology, which asserts indirectly that it can make everything out of each individual.

My insight became clearer. Although Charles Darwin had already written his epoch-making work "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection," a work which has been translated into nearly all living languages, as well as his work "On the Descent of Man," and that on "The Expression of the Emotions," scarcely any notice was taken of them in the scientific lectures. The fact astounded me; indeed, it confirmed my belief that an education through nature herself was not imparted even by

the university, and that the boasted freedom of science existed only on paper. The method was the old one, one started from the most highly developed organisms and worked downwards. So there remained nothing for me but to put myself by private study in possession of the branches of knowledge of which the university only touched the fringe. The same befell me in the study of the theory of teaching ; it was regarded merely as an appendage to philosophy. There was indeed a pedagogical seminary, but it was intended for students of classics and history. Those students who wished to devote themselves to school-teaching, were, from the first, looked on as inferior. It became more and more evident to me that pedagogical training of candidates for the teaching profession was held by the State in low estimation. I was astounded at the disregard of things which I considered *fundamental*, because I hoped that a new era would arise from the education of humanity, and believed pedagogy to be the torch-bearer of the humanising process. But nothing of the kind ; the university carried on everything, and demanded everything ; it gave lectures on diseased animals, but left the question of the education of man to nurses, nursemaids, mothers, and teachers' seminaries, which sailed under ecclesiastical colours. And so things are still. With a few exceptions Germany, the land of universities, has no chairs of educational theory. Can one wonder that the academically trained teachers look at pedagogy as the business of so-called schoolmasters, who need a *halo* in order to feel themselves men of science ?

To religion I was indifferent ; at all events, my

former scruples had disappeared. I had nothing more to do with church and clergy, had neither to teach religion nor to profess it. In the lectures I heard nothing of controversial matters, which make life restless and unfriendly. How are natural history and mathematics concerned with belief and dogma? Only when Sunday came, and the bells rang, and I met the church-goers, I became restless. I thought of my youth, my mother, my brothers and sisters, and felt that I ought to overcome my doubts; but I never went to church. I was glad to rest or to make expeditions on foot.

“Why do you not go to church?” a young theological student, a strict believer from conviction, once asked me. “I do not feel the want of it,” I answered. There was less need for me to dread the answer, as I was daily discovering new wonders of the universe, and felt as in the loftiest cathedral. I saw God, although I had so often doubted his personality, in the mystery of minute cell-life, as in the wonderful phenomena of chemical and physical truth; I saw his finger in the rocks of the mountain range as in the kingdom of flowers, on the earth as well as in the heavenly bodies, whose obedience to law I followed. My soul was filled with images of a divine principle, which—manifest in worm and cell, in humanity as in the universe—rules from eternity, ever creating. It was the eternally old enigma which took possession of the innermost depths of my soul. I found more than science, I felt the hand of a power which created man. Yet when I thought I had overcome all doubts, the questions started up: “What existed before the

nebular fluid? How did the principle of growth come into the world of matter? Who created it, and how can this world of wonders have existed from eternity?" . . .

When I followed up such thoughts belief in the Bible seemed natural, and yet soon after all had vanished again, and I saw in knowledge the only path to inward happiness. But I always avoided hurting honest people, even though I felt myself an atheist. The atheistic bombast of the students was as repugnant to me as the pietism, which makes a business of its feelings.

"You are but a *halfer*," said my friend Swoboda often, when we disputed about God and immortality. "I cannot understand why you are not able to free yourself from belief in a personal God!" Regeneration is often a slow, slow process. Unfortunately my talented friend had long ago lost the ideal view of life. "I have given up my ideals, one lives only once," he wrote to me from Buda-Pesth, and our friendship, which I had thought to be lifelong, came to an end. It was as with other friendships; everyday life dissipates everything, friendship as well as idealism. All at once I was led to think of my future. When I changed my lodging at the cobbler Ohm's for a sunny and clean one, I met my predecessor, a mathematician whom I knew, and whose industry was commended. The impression he made upon me was crushing. Bodily and mental suffering were written upon his wan face.

"I am nearly desperate," he cried. "N. is a mean fellow, a cur!" "What has happened?" I asked, with misgiving. "I was a fool not to stay in

Greifswald. He has plucked me, because I heard his lectures only for one term, and he has not made enough money out of me. Can you imagine what a state of mind I am in?" "How can the Examination Board permit it?" I cried excitedly, "what is it there for?" "Examination Board indeed!" he replied. "The historian understands nothing of mathematics, and the mathematician nothing of chemistry. Each one rides his own hobby and is a king, *Dei Gratia!*"

My comrade's mishap was enough to make me consider my own future, especially because, notwithstanding the greatest economy, I had already spent more than half of my money. I dined at the cheapest places and did not spend an unnecessary penny, but college-fees and practical work cost much, and I was too proud to canvass for bursaries. So I set out to Professor N.'s; I wanted him to tell me how I could most surely attain my end.

"I have no time," he growled, searching among piles of books which lay upon the table. "When would it be convenient to you, sir?" "You see that I have my hands full," he snarled at me. That was plain. "The churl will not see me again in a hurry," thought I, and turned my back on him. Some weeks later I sought out Geheimrath Kühn, that teacher who had raised himself from a simple farmer to a renowned investigator. He was kindness itself. He asked in what subject I took the greatest interest. The answer was difficult, I had not yet seriously considered the question. "In the natural sciences!" I said at last. "Have you private means?" he continued. When I answered "none," he said:



"Then you will have, as quickly as possible, to find a paying position; for instance, as teacher or practical chemist. You have been a teacher already, do you feel an inclination for that calling?"

I could tell him that I had been a teacher with body and soul; but I told him also that I was possessed by the love of freedom, and had felt the fetters of a dependent position, and would prefer not to be subject [either to the State or the community. "I would run any risks in order to gain an independent position."

"I think I can give you no better advice," he answered, "than that you take an appointment at an agricultural college, after completing your studies. The agricultural and farming schools are becoming more and more valued; they are patronised by the Government and the provincial unions, and they are certainly more independent than others.

"The work, moreover, is pleasant and charming, especially for lovers of natural history, through its natural combination of science with life. You can advance your own studies, too, by microscopic and chemical work; there are societies, small and great, with which you can co-operate; in short, it offers much that you will not find elsewhere."

"I think I see plain-sailing ahead," I rejoined, delighted. "A free and many-sided field of work must satisfy one." "If you are a thorough teacher, you can do good service in improving methods. Certainly, agricultural schools are still in process of development, and you will not repent your choice." He imparted to me much out of his own experience, and took me into the garden of the agricultural

academy, pointing out to me this and that. I returned to my work full of hope and of cheerful courage. My future looked brighter than ever.

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I determined to leave Halle and go to Göttingen, and was, in many ways, much better satisfied there. Even the greater cleanliness of the town, albeit not exemplary, a better tone among the students, and the ease with which one could reach the country, were pleasant circumstances. Attendance, too, on the lectures and practical work was easier than at Halle, where one often had to walk ten minutes or more from one lecture to another. I did not repent having followed the advice of a fellow student, especially as I gained the acquaintance of excellent teachers and celebrated men.

When I matriculated a pale little man said to me: "So you are from Lusatia? Then we are fellow countrymen!" shook hands with me, and asked me to call upon him. From his signature I saw that it was Rudolf Hermann Lotze. True I did not then fully appreciate the honour; but when I heard what the name Lotze meant, and had become more intimate with him, I recognised that such intercourse is of value. Months passed before I went to see him; I was shy and hated servility. I preferred, first, to become at home with him at lecture. It was necessary to have known him as instructor in order to understand the power of his personality. As soon as he entered the lecture-room all sound ceased.

Having reached the professor's chair, he drew out a sheet of paper—it was blank paper—supported his head on his right hand, and propounded his thoughts with such clearness and precision that one was rapt in admiration. His addresses on philosophy, logic, metaphysics, and the philosophy of religion, were the best I had ever heard; simply unsurpassed. Moreover, he was a teacher; he did not let us fill up the time with taking notes, by which one's train of thought is disturbed, but before the end of the lecture he dictated a short *résumé*. His mastery was most strikingly shown in our being able to follow him without effort, and to feel as though one had thought and discovered it all for oneself. When I went from Lotze's lecture to that of the celebrated botanist Grisebach I felt as if in a desert; his lectures were marked neither by warmth nor clearness. Inspiration, I said to myself, depends less upon the subject than upon the teacher. When I saw and heard how dry a subject could be made, unless bound up with culture and life, I was again seized by the old, happy feelings. I wanted to become a master in the art of teaching, in order to give the young what they do not receive, for I had always felt, as soon as I came in contact with children, that I had power over them, that my head and heart opened out to them. Unfortunately, I had reason daily to complain of the want of skill and understanding in my own teachers. I felt this especially with the teacher of educational theory. I was fond of Professor Krüger, who was old and deaf, and was heartily sorry that the number of his hearers never rose above three; indeed, I was often the only one,

and begged him not to lecture ; but such a wretched one-sided course as his could scarcely be conceived. If this professor had possessed any originality, how much I should have gained ! As it was, I gained nothing but the sad conviction that theory of education, the most important part of philosophy, is utterly neglected by the State. Therefore, the professor's invitation to visit him was fruitless ; I felt that there was a wall of division between him and me. His ideas moved in the well-known rut : classical education in the gymnasium ; Christian education in the elementary school ; that was the commonplace foundation on which his ideas were based, I could see hourly how one-sided are the results of gymnasium teaching, how hopeless is the classical gc-cart on modern ground.

The students neither asked for nor understood any reform. Of course, the State had in such teachers the best security for being allowed to sleep on. But I was embittered by seeing educational theory so represented. Even at that time, the demand that all teaching should be based on objects, was, for me, *conditio sine qua non* : but of Diesterweg's spirit, which I had tasted, there was nothing to be found. So it was Professor Krüger who drove me away from pedagogy, as taught at universities. It was depressing, heart-breaking, to see that the future teachers took absolutely no notice of ideas on education. They ran from one lecture to another, to hoard up scientific material, as if their aim and object were to become college-lecturers ; to study the art of teaching entered nobody's mind. They wanted bread and honour, and if they got to be gymnasium

teachers all was accomplished; men who devote themselves to pedagogy as essential to their calling are still the exception.

Of celebrated men, with whom I came into contact, I mention Weber and Wöhler. I was one of the last, if not the last, who was examined by Weber. William Edward Weber is one of three famous brothers. With his brother Ernest Henry he established the wave-theory, the foundation of modern optics and acoustics; he constructed with Gausz the first electro-magnetic telegraph, and distinguished himself by investigations in electricity and terrestrial magnetism. When I made his acquaintance he had already been relieved from lecturing. Owing to his age his examinations were very extraordinary. In a certain sense the celebrated Wöhler was also an original. I never sat under him as teacher, but he sometimes came into the laboratory.

"What have you got there?" he asked me once, his hands in his dressing-gown pockets and shaking with old age. "Have you tasted it yet?"

"Tasted!" I exclaimed, and thought that he was joking.

"Do not laugh, one may learn a great deal by the taste." And then he told me humorously how, when young, he had employed the method of tasting. This chemist, who discovered aluminium, and produced, with Liebig, epoch-making works in the sphere of organic chemistry, was, like all great men, remarkable for simplicity. One of the most amusing figures was Klinkerfues, whom I met in merry as in serious hours. I made his acquaintance at an open-air concert, and out of regard for him

I accompanied him at night to the observatory, of which he was director. I shall never forget the private lecture on astronomy he gave me as we walked home. Klinkerfues was a genius; he was not only so much at home in methods of computation as to discover comets, but he possessed a wonderful inventive power. He was once summoned by Field-Marshal Moltke to give him an account of a camp-kettle, his latest idea. Report says that he missed a fortune by the unfavourable impression he made on the great strategist. I met him for the last time before my doctor's examination. "If you are plucked," he called after me, "it is your own fault. Why did you not choose astronomy?" This gifted man committed suicide in order to put an end to his mental condition. He might have become immensely rich through his inventions, but instead was only a source of riches to others. I may say that no teacher ever made so unique an impression upon me as Klinkerfues; he was an ardent friend of the people, and assertor of the natural way of regarding the world. Therein might be found the chief reason why he was so cheated. If I had lived economically in Halle, I did so still more in Göttingen. Indeed, I foresaw the rapid end of my money, and the beginning of hard times. The sums which I had spent in helping others out of their difficulties, would have been of good service to me now I was forced to look about me for money.

But who will lend a poor student money? The case was hard. I did not want to borrow, but had nothing to sell; and when I was obliged to think

of borrowing, I did not know where or how to set about it. One day the thought struck me that I might pawn my natural history collections. How happy I was, when after some humiliating expeditions, I succeeded in doing this! But how disappointed I was at the small sum received, and how melancholy at the thought that I could not redeem them. I lost the fruits of much labour and fell into a state of discouragement. I had always lived sparingly, but had not till now had actual starvation in sight. To work one's brain, day after day, on insufficient food and without hope, this wears out one's spirits. When I hurried through the streets in order not to waste a moment, and looked into the faces of those whose glory consisted in duel-cuts, and whose strength was in dissolute pleasures, I said to myself, "There is no justice; and the teachings about a God of Love were invented by those who were rolling in riches." I looked back and recollected the same anxiety in my old home. That thought reminded me that I had rich relations, and I resolved to write letters, begging for a loan. Talk of charity! Either there was no answer at all, or they excused themselves with universal want of money, etc. "You are ambitious," said one, "You must see how far you can get on. I would not let my boy study, and now I can buy him a landed estate!" People, who had not sacrificed a penny to striving after an ideal, made merry because I was on the point of being forced to retreat.

So the struggle continued. Then some slight help was given me by a chemist, who had passed

his examination brilliantly, but could not find a place because he was suspected of being a socialist. He took me to a workman's eating-house where I could get my dinner for a few pence. "Do you understand yet what we want?" he asked me, when I found myself among operatives who had more sensible views than dozens of my university colleagues. "You will learn to understand, you will become one of us!"

"Your ideas are not unknown to me," I answered, "but I do not feel moved to work as an agitator, and that one must do if one wishes to be of service to the cause!"

"Let every one work in his own way," replied he, drawing from his pocket some papers which he gave me to read. "Who are those that suffer hunger? The most capable, the workers. And what becomes of the beggarly corps-students, who are so blameless? They become cavaliers, proprietors of large estates, Government officials, Ministers of State! And what becomes of us? Who will help us and lend us even a dollar? I tell you, if you begin to think about social questions you will soon be a socialist!"

His conversations were in this strain. He tried to open my eyes to social misery, and gave me all kinds of examples of intrigues in academical circles, the plundering of poor men, and stealing of intellectual work. He succeeded in making me lose all faith in a divine ordering of the world, and in suggesting strong doubts about taking a position under the State. It would have been impossible for me to take any practical interest in socialism.



I felt myself absolutely unfit to leave my work of education for that of socialistic agitation. My impulse was to discover truths and to work for the young. Therefore, I was indeed happy when again able to continue my studies. An uncle, Gottlieb Richter by name, was the noble friend who lent me 200 thaler (£30) without interest, or fixed time for repayment, so that it became possible for me to drive away my darkest cares. Brighter days came, the sun shone with greater warmth, and soon I thought no more about the misery of the world. My happiest hours were those in which I was investigating the lowest forms of plant life. I did not care about preparing many specimens and proving well-known truths, but wanted to make fresh discoveries. I learnt, at the same time, how needful is artistic skill. Even if my own diagrams, with explanatory notes, are not worth mentioning, yet it is noteworthy that I then recognised the great value of learning to draw, and that drawing is indispensable to naturalists and teachers. But these investigations became especially important, because through them I was penetrated by the conviction that the education of the young must start from *Nature*. "Nature trains the senses," I said; "she forces upon us manual work; she unites science and art; she takes us into the open air and gives truths and facts, which are of service to the community. She gives us all we need. *Education must start from Nature and have her for its centre.*" I was filled with such thoughts and was happy in the prospect of soon becoming a teacher again. "Then I will set about things in

a different way," thought I, "Diesterweg shall be my model!" That was the time when an inspiring article from the pen of our Master (Diesterweg) was more welcome to me than anything. I was full of enthusiasm for the independent teacher, who possessed the courage and had the power to inflame the teaching profession with a desire for freedom.

Once when I was with Lotze, who treated me as a friend, he noticed my interest in educational questions. So he spoke about Herbart and Diesterweg, also about Dressler, head of a training college, whom my father had known, and at last he came to speak of the conflict about educational theories. I asked whether that might not one day be finally settled by definitely psychological laws. He did not think so. "There will constantly be fresh points of view," he said. "But of what use is psychology if it only goes half-way?" I asked. "He thought it would not be of much use, even if it were definitely settled. It must remain subordinate, according to whether education is working for the Church, or for a free State, and free communities. In spite of that she is a leader, although not to the extent that Herbart would wish."

After this conversation, which turned on this deeply interesting question, I had the feeling that Lotze was himself not convinced of the absolute value of psychology; but when I heard him at lecture, it appeared to me as if he did ascribe too much importance to psychology. The matter interested me more and more, and I hoped to find in literature attacks upon the supremacy of psychology; but I had to suspend my investigations, for I was

now obliged to devote myself to working for my examination, although for the last time ! But before I had finished my work, and just when my money was getting low, a post was offered me at an agricultural school. Modest as was the remuneration I saw light in darkness, and accepted with pleasure. "In that retirement," I thought, "you will be master of yourself." "You will have nothing to do with Church or State, and to live in the midst of nature must be glorious." Soon I lost all hesitation, for the director wrote of the pleasant work, and the variety of it, in case I wished to busy myself in several directions. Moreover, there was a charm for me in going from the West to the East. Eastern Germany was unknown to me, and I hoped to find opportunities of learning something of Russia and Poland.

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At last the time was come when I could fly out into the world and devote myself to teaching the young. A thousand thoughts coursed through my head as the steam-horse whirled me from the mountains and hills towards the eastern plain. The landscape became monotonous, grey and cold in spite of autumnal sunshine ; but I painted my future in bright colours, so that I did not feel nature's monotony. As arranged, I met my chief at the hotel of the garrison-town (Sagan, Prov. Silesia). We were to drive together to the royal domain, in the grounds of which stood the agricultural school. He was a

round-shouldered man, over fifty, with a large head, shaggy hair and beard, yellowish complexion, and restless eyes, in which not a spark of warm feeling shone. He gave one the impression of coldness, although he took pains to appear cordial. He at once began talking volubly, and as learnedly as a book about politics and his friends, and invited me to join the company. I declined; the long drive had tired me, and I preferred to wait in the coffee-room. So he returned to the salon, where dragoon and artillery officers, lawyers, and agriculturists were clinking their glasses merrily. Hour after hour passed, and my chief did not appear. I asked the landlord when the director usually drove home. He smiled. "You must have patience," he answered, "it may be rather late." "Does he come here every Saturday?" "Generally; he has many friends here. There is nothing going on in Briesnitz; a hopeless neighbourhood. Perhaps you are Dr. Gerber's successor?" "I cannot say; I have accepted a post as teacher at the agricultural school." "Well, you will not stand it long," he remarked. "You must come very often to us."

The matter looked serious. I waited hour after hour until the director, surrounded by guests, whom he was amusing by his humour and repartee, made his appearance towards midnight.

At last we took our seats in the carriage, and away we drove into the darkness. My superior spoke but little; he was full of wine and needed rest. Before long he was snoring, till my ears split. After an hour or two we crossed a shaky bridge, and soon the carriage stopped. The coachman lifted out

the little man, and led him into a palatial building. He seemed uneasy, looked for the taper, led me along a passage, and said : "There is your room, I will see you to-morrow. Good-night !" I entered the room and was thunder-struck. "This to be my dwelling ? Impossible," I cried, looking to right and left. I believed myself in a servant's room. All the furniture I detected was a bed, a peasant's table without a cloth, and one wooden chair ; in a recess of the wall I found likewise a shabby cupboard. The room was not papered ; it had no chest of drawers, nor wardrobe, nor sofa. There was not even a looking-glass, and the moon shone through the windows, without blinds or curtains. I looked for a lamp, but in vain. The excitement which seized me was indescribable. I felt myself in a den, without knowing how to escape. Ought I not to go away at once, out into the night, and publicly disgrace the director ? I seated myself on the chair and resolved to await the morning. I struggled with feelings of discouragement and helplessness ; I did not know what to do, for I was without means and could not become a burden to my mother. At last I said : "I must take up the struggle ; I must conquer myself !" so I sought my bed, and sleep gave my oppressed heart rest. When I awoke it was late. I dreaded going out. The neighbourhood oppressed me by its poverty and forlornness, and in vain I looked about for hills and beauties of nature. At last I conquered myself and went out of doors. The institution, near a forest, was at one end of a large poverty-stricken village. What I saw and heard distressed me, so that I soon came back again.

At mid-day I went, cold as ice, to dine with the director, and made the acquaintance of his wife and child. They did not trouble themselves in the least about me, never asked me about my past life, my home, nor about anything, which could have made one feel more at home. Nor was there any talk of the school and my work in it. I heard instead that the director had once been in the service of a Prince, and had this and that Baron as friends, and that his wife's cradle had been rocked on a landed estate near the Polish frontier.

The next day I appeared as an absolute stranger before my pupils; no one introduced me to my work. After a few days I said to the director that I must start from a fresh basis in the school, if we were to get on. "Do exactly as you think best," he replied, "but the pupils must make a good show when the duke comes at Easter!"

For the rest, the director never put in an appearance while I was at work, nor asked after me at all. He did not exert the smallest cell in his brain on my account; his talk and action consisted in complete ignoring of all interest in myself and our business concerns. Weeks passed before I could to any extent accustom myself to these conditions. I wrote my mother not a word about my disappointments, wishing to spare her pain; and when my school-friend Pohlisch—who had exchanged the master's desk for the pulpit—wrote to me that he wanted to see me, I left him without an answer, in the hope that in such circumstances he would not visit me. Nevertheless, he came, but did not stay long! "I would not stay here another twenty-four hours if I

were you," he cried. "You have fallen out of the frying-pan into the fire!" "Perhaps I shall not have been here in vain," I answered. "Well, tell me, old fellow, he said, Whose fault is it this time? The Church, as before?" "What do these allusions mean?" I rejoined. "The director is a freemason, surely you know that, a dreaded freemason." "How have you managed to smell out all this?" said I, feeling hurt. I knew it was so, for my colleague Kästner had already told me that the director was avoided by the peasants and clergy on that account. But I did not choose to be a laughing-stock for my friend, who had often ridiculed my spirit of freedom, so I changed the subject; at the same time admitting that, under such management, I had a dark future before me. Soon better days came; I found a friend in my countryman Kästner, who had studied at Tharandt. Before long my pupils became attached to me; indeed, in later years they gave expression to their feelings by writing to me as a body. In the school I maintained an inexorable strictness, in order to put an end to the old slovenly system; but out of school I started friendly intercourse with the pupils. As school was often over by ten o'clock, I had plenty of time to myself. In the evenings I often read or lectured on Lessing, Schiller, or Shakespeare to my pupils. Frequently I visited them when working in the fields, or we might have been seen on excursions together, or at an agricultural show. The mingling of theory with practice, of natural science and mathematics with life and culture, was fitted to make the labour profitable. Nothing stood in the way. My pupils were

from seventeen to twenty-four years of age. I could open the book of life to them, and show how every one of them could exercise influence. Taking care not to over-step the bounds of freedom, which I considered a great art, I became their apostle of free intellectual life. I again saw clearly how quickly the spirit of youth bears fruit, and that one may, without risk, impart to somewhat advanced young people the fundamental thoughts of a natural way of looking at the world.

My abundant leisure enabled me to ramble through fields and woods, and to gain knowledge in agriculture and forestry ; also I found ample time to employ myself with reading.

The "Protestant School Manual," which I had used at the 'Teachers' college, and as an elementary school-teacher, was now left to the worms. I needed neither a Protestant nor a Catholic "guide to knowledge" ; I wanted to educate men. I thought besides that the less one was bound to authorities, the sooner one would attain to independence as a teacher. Experience was my best teacher.

In my teaching I became convinced that the treatment of subjects separately is injurious, except so far as the nature of the subjects renders it necessary. I thought rather of concentration. For example, the combination of chemistry with physics occupied me especially, and I planned out a course of teaching which aimed at this combination ; so by setting down in short sentences the results of my class-work a little book came into being : "Physics and Chemistry in Combined Lessons." The publishers however, to whom I applied, declined to publish this



sketch, so that I kept the work in my desk until, when I was in Italy, a certain Zernecke took it with him to Germany; since when it has been irrecoverably lost. I did not at Briesnitz reach any further in this union of the natural sciences as educational material. I was divided in myself. On the one hand, the desire to reform existing methods would not leave me; on the other side, I did not myself feel sure enough to assert an idea that should cut down to the root. Had I found any one, as eager as myself for reformed education, and had the circumstances of the school been different, I was on the best road to carry out a combination of natural science with mathematics. Yet another hindrance came in the way; I had to do with somewhat elder scholars, not with children; and reforms must be carried out among children. I have never found real satisfaction in pedagogical work except among children.

Without troubling myself about the theories of economists, I gained some insight into the despotism of landed property and of the Church. On this domain, as upon other estates, the condition of the working people was most sad. They were wretchedly paid, and mostly in kind. If they were good for nothing, they were left to their fate; if they were industrious, orderly people, money was lent to them. With that their fate was sealed. The advances had to be repeated, and so they came to the most deplorable dependence. Their best strength was sucked out of them, and they owed this slave's existence to their usefulness. Spirit-drinking was universal, even amongst the peasants; they were cowardly natures,

and let themselves be exploited by squirearchy and clergy. They would talk big in the public-house, but were without energy where any endeavour after progress was to be made. That I found by my own experience. The idea came to me of educating the peasants by lectures; I wished, as Professor Kühn had suggested, to be an enlightening influence. The results were lamentable. Mine host, a miller, and a few other village magnates were ready to attend them, but the crowd did not consider it worth while to go to the lectures. Cut off from the world, dependent on all sides, brought up in stupidity and superstition, father and son wished to remain what the grandfather had been. Of the hopelessness of their condition they were scarcely conscious, least of all did they take it to be the consequence of their own want of energy. A hundred things became ineffectual in their clumsy hands; attempts at combined production and combined market came to nothing. They cared neither for the teacher of agriculture, nor to know the results of experiments in growing crops on the domain; neither did they care about rational management and other things for which a sphere of practical experience was open to them.

"We don't want your models!" was the sum of their refusals.

"The intention of Government and of the agricultural central committee," said my friend Kästner, "in starting a model farm here at the other end of nowhere, was praiseworthy; but they have been utterly mistaken. You cannot graft sound shoots upon rotten branches."

At last Easter approached, and the director was constantly fussing about the examinations. If the duke, the chairman of the committee, could not come, at any rate, his deputy, Count Zedlitz, and some agricultural authorities, would appear. Not one of the inhabitants or estate-owners of the neighbourhood put in an appearance. The director was pale, but his contempt for us gave way to a cringing politeness, which I met with indifference. When I saw how this man, who expended without control sums intended to be used for providing instruction, dragged on the examination by the help of question-sheets, so that the answer often came before the question, I shook with inward merriment. I saw also how little the visitors were impressed with the state of affairs. At the close of the examination Count Zedlitz made his acknowledgments to the pupils. When we sat later on at the festive board, and the count drank to the new stimulating influence in the institution, I blushed at the distinction. I was uncomfortable at being thus made prominent in the director's presence. After the meal the count took me in to the farmyard, spoke of horse-shoeing and the endeavours to improve the farming in his own village; also of his journeys for study, which gave me insight into his character. I had never met so perfect a gentleman. He invited me to visit him sometime; but I never met him again.

Although I had met with appreciation from Count Zedlitz and others, I could not reconcile myself to the idea of staying in Briesnitz. "The sooner the better," I thought, without knowing what to do. I had more and more the feeling that I ought to give up thinking

of a career in the service of the State or communal schools. To follow a prescribed plan of study, year after year, without freedom for individual treatment of the pupils ; always subject to an inspection, which thwarts an independent schoolmaster ; all one's life in a narrow circle, to work through fixed paragraphs and manuals without being able to stretch out a hand into rich, many-sided life, the thought made me shiver. But what was I to do? Must I repress myself and take up the yoke? The matter was continually in my thoughts, but I found no solution. If I had had a patron I should perhaps have started a school of my own. Everything seemed unsatisfactory, and I had very nearly taken refuge in the village school of a free community. Just then I read of a vacancy in a well-known institute for imbeciles, at Gladbach in the Rhine province. I ventured to apply. The thought of making children, bodily and mentally crippled, into partly useful beings by individual methods of teaching, filled me with enthusiasm. It seemed as if I might make good what nature had marred.

I asked for leave of absence and journeyed thither. The impression was powerful ; I was moved to the depths of my soul. But what I had not thought of was the spirit in which the institution was worked.

To educate these half-animal creatures on a Christian basis, as gifts of love and images of God, seemed to me impossible. A visit to the superintendent (chaplain) swept away my last doubt ; I could not bear the sight of him. "Thank heaven !" I cried, on coming out of his house. "No, honoured sir," I said to the director, "I cannot take the

situation." "Do not be so hasty," he answered. "Dr. Müller's vote is for you; the superintendent is outvoted." "No," I replied, "I cannot; I should not suit here." "You are fit for it. You have shown this by your intercourse with the pupils. Make up your mind about it, but soon!" This I promised, and received my railway expenses. The feeling came over me that the money was wasted, it would have been better had I never come. I travelled back to the east, to my corner of the world, full of dust and pine-trees, and wrote to the director that I must decline, because I was too far removed from the religious standpoint of the institution.

Winter had come. Cut off from the world and buried in snow, I passed my life in my comfortless room. One of my pleasures was the care of a covey of partridges, which the frost had driven to my window, and I fed them there. "What shall I do in this hole?" I asked myself again. "Is it my duty to be at the service of this school for ever, with no thanks?" The peasants were just as unfit to associate with as the director, who stayed the whole day in his comfortable home, smoked cigars, and had his bottle of wine on the table, whilst I was put off with a wretched salary and poor food. Neither could I associate with the squires of the neighbourhood, most of whom were blockheads with a varnish of gentility. And the chemical laboratory, too, which might have helped me, was a picture of desolation; the most necessary chemicals and apparatus were wanting, whilst there was a set of delicate balances with nothing to weigh. The school was subsidised with a considerable sum; and where did

the money go? "There is no audit of accounts; things have gone on like this for years!" said my friend Kästner. "And the worst of it is that we cannot get at the director!" The affair put me into a state of excitement. I took him (the director) to task one day. He said I must order what was wanting. But at the first modest request he made a long face; so it came to plain speaking, which ended in my requesting the managers to submit the teaching apparatus to an inspection.

My letter remained unanswered. I saw how the land lay, and determined to give notice. It was at this time that an advertisement caught my eye in the "Universal German Teachers' Journal." A master was wanted for a *Collegio tecnico commerciale*, in Italy. The longer I considered, the more I felt inclined to address myself to the governing body. "You can return to Germany at any time," I thought, "and it must be good to become acquainted with foreign parts, strange people and countries, unfamiliar artistic and intellectual life, and to see how foreign children are brought up!" So I wrote to Bergamo to the governors, or governing body, of the commercial institute. The answer soon came. Full of expectation I opened the letter, only to lay it aside disappointed. I found that it meant making sacrifices once more. The situation offered only board in the school, not a penny of salary, not even travelling expenses were to be paid.

But as, in the meantime, I had become eager for a situation abroad, and said to myself I could earn pocket-money by giving private lessons, I accepted, on the condition that I should receive Italian

instruction in return. The answer was favourable, and I promised to undertake the situation of professor of mathematics and natural science, as well as that of inspector. When I gave notice the director was friendly, and tried to persuade me to lengthen my stay, and even offered me a hundred dollars rise of salary. But I persisted in giving my notice. "I need a new atmosphere," I said. "I am half buried here, I must get out into the world."

\* \* \* \* \*

My notice was accepted, and when the Christmas-bells, in the year 1879, were ringing, I was in the Schwarzwald with my own people, and soon after travelling towards Mont Cenis. The unfamiliar sights transformed me; my blood seemed to flow more rapidly; the grandeur of the Alps moved me to tears. When I could find an hour's rest, and a view of the majesty of Alpine scenery, I felt as happy as, when a boy, I wandered through thickets and fields. There they stood before me, the giants which I had already seen in my dreams! The impression was overpowering. Each picture was lovelier than the preceding; only the chatter of the travellers annoyed me. I should have liked best to set out with my walking-staff. When the setting sun shed its gold upon the distant white summits, and Mont Blanc faded away in rosy light, I was filled with feelings unknown before.

I hurried from the Lake of Geneva to the railway

station in order to take the night train for Turin. This was the first time that I ever felt the want of power to converse in a foreign language. I thought of my attempts in childhood, and made up my mind to take lessons in French. I looked back at German school-teaching, and saw how much that is one-sided and useless is imposed upon the young, while what helps in life itself is entirely neglected. When I imagined that I was speaking French, I saw by the face of my listener that he did not understand a word. Of course, my masters had never been near France, and every second word of theirs was about "grammatical and formal construction," the "spirit" of the language, and I could meditate on the value of this training as I sat in my compartment. When a gentleman addressed me, I did not know how to answer him; he was a Frenchman. Then I found an interpreter in another passenger; he was a brewer from Basle. I was especially interested in two types of men; one was an Italian workman, who had earned money in Belgium; the other was a soldierly person, who knew something of every language, and spoke none properly, as the brewer said. He, too, was an Italian, and had emigrated to Australia, twenty years before, to seek his fortune as a gold-digger. Thence he had gone to California and Mexico, and now he was returning to his home, of which he had heard nothing all the while. He was so full of his good luck that he opened his immense trunk, to show us dozens of gold watches and a bag of gold-dust. The other man did not stir from his place, both hands in his trouser-pockets, and his eyes immovably



fixed on us. It was near midnight, on the last day of December. I had luckily escaped the custom-house at Modane. We were sitting once more in our carriage, which was the last of the train, when we were violently shaken by collision with a train coming from Chambéry. We fell from our seats; the boxes flew over our heads, and the workman rushed after the gold-pieces, which had fallen out of his pockets. The back of the carriage was crushed to pieces, and the windows were shattered. The beginning of the new year was not auspicious! We descended from our carriage; the station-master inquired whether any one was hurt and needed medical care. We had come off pretty well, although I suffered for months after from pains in the back. At last we got into a fresh carriage, and away we went to beautiful Italy. My impressions of the Italian winter-landscape and the journey to Turin were full of interest. There were new people, customs, and scenery. I was in good spirits in spite of my back-ache. We took leave of one another in Turin, but the gold-digger would not let me go. There was nothing for it but that I must dine with him. He played the gentleman, and though I could only cry "Italia!" we touched glasses, and shook hands. At last we parted. He travelled homewards, and I through the long plain of the Po to Bergamo, where I arrived early in the evening, and was received by the director. It did me good to be addressed in German. The director was a Swiss, a thick-set, powerful man, who seemed to act more than to speak. One finds the Swiss everywhere; they are pioneers of culture, like the English. It

was fortunate that the school was near the station, for the cold distressed me very much. How could I, in my corner of Silesia, dream of northern frost in the south? Indeed, it seemed to me more icy than on the German plain, where the east wind goes through marrow and bone. Hugentobler, the director, was one of those people for whom one feels at first neither sympathy nor antipathy. His manners were stiff; yet, when he spoke, I felt that I was with one who inspired confidence. A strong voice, a sympathetic tone, and an unaffected way of showing himself as he really was, did me good. I had seen enough at home of pretence and affectations, behind which there was nothing but vulgarity. Nevertheless, I felt more and more depressed, the nearer we approached the school. One who sets foot in the land of lemons in the smiling spring, and drives from his saloon-carriage to a comfortable hotel, cannot feel the contrast of north and south as he does who has to walk through dark streets, with his travelling-bag over his shoulder, in an unusually cold winter. The side street, wretchedly lighted, and the entrance through a gateway into a dark space in which, not without difficulty, one found the staircase, was all calculated to awaken a feeling of disillusion. And then the bare rooms, with their icy stone-floors, with furniture fit for a workhouse! I shivered. I looked round in vain for a stove. It seemed impossible to live even a single cheerful hour in these rooms. Is this my home? I thought.

"Come," said the director, "you will dine with me. You must be hungry."

"Will you take me first to my room?" I asked. "I should like to put my dress in order."

He seemed painfully embarrassed. "I am very sorry," he said, "but for the moment I cannot offer you a room to yourself. You must put up with the dormitory of the younger pupils. I have had a folding-screen put round your bed. Do not, I entreat you, be too much disappointed, things will improve!"

"But, sir," I answered in the worst humour imaginable, "where shall I put my clothes, and books and collections, and how can I work in this corner? There is not even a table at my disposal! No,—this will not do!"

"I beg you," he answered, "do not lose courage, I will do everything to satisfy you. The single rooms are all occupied by the elder boarders; it is impossible for me to empty one for you. You will have noticed already that I have to struggle for an existence. But things will be better soon."

I turned hot and cold. I took off my overcoat, and tried to wash myself with the small quantity of water at my disposal. At last I entered the dining-hall, in which I found pupils of all sizes, and such a variety of types as I had never before seen together—Italian, French, and Swiss. I had to do with sons of aristocrats and of middle-class people; with sons of officers and doctors, merchants, lawyers, and travellers in the wine-trade, cattle-dealers, and other classes of society. The conversation was carried on by some pupils in French, by others in Italian; again by others in German and English. The whole was an international medley, a world of contrasts,

which from an educational point of view was beneficial. The tone was not at all what was usual in such institutions. Teachers and pupils, young and elder, were quite at home together. There were perhaps half a dozen pupils from twenty to twenty-five years of age; there were twenty or more younger ones; besides these the school was attended by day-scholars. The supper was the plainest imaginable, quite after Italian fashion. It was so plain that I gazed at the pupils to see how they looked. But the company was blooming and cheerful to look at. The waiting was done by a man, and every now and then the wife of the director appeared. She spoke only Italian, but understood some German and French. She could accomplish more than a hundred others of her sex; she understood her husband, and worked from morning till night to keep up the school.

"We live from hand to mouth," said the director, when the pupils had gone to bed, and he and I were alone. "Every year a boy is added to my family; there are already seven of them; and the old disappointments come again and again. But one day spring will come. If I had a rich friend all would be well; as it is, I have to work like the ant, which drags its burden along. Sometimes I have been ready to despair, but then a ray of light always shone through the darkness. Yes, doctor, there is no merit in living; but to remain true to oneself, that is something!"

"How did you come hither?" I inquired. "Why did you attempt such an undertaking without money?"

He then told me how he had come from German—into French Switzerland. "It would not do in Geneva," he said. "I had passed another examination, but I found difficulties. Then I became full of the idea of going to Italy. Free tendencies, with the attempts of some to uplift Italy, drew me to Naples. I passed another examination, and with the highest hopes I began work as professor in a 'Realschule' (*modern—non-classical*). But I did not feel at home there, I wished to be independent; so I gave up the position." I began to have a fellow-feeling with the man, and to forget my depression and weariness.

"And how did you come hither?" I asked.

"It came about in this way. A Swiss, with the help of some free-thinking countrymen, had started a large school in the *Città alta*. The unexpected happened. One night he disappeared. The villain had taken a bribe, and in a moment the flourishing school was a prey to the Jesuits. Then a gentleman wrote to me: 'Come here, make the attempt, we will support you!' So I came to Bergamo; but fortune did not favour me. The enemies of the priests were not going to run the risk of being disappointed a second time, so I saw myself alone, and began the struggle alone, and have found it very hard. Look at me; I look like a man of fifty, and am only just forty!" I was drawn to the man; he was after my own heart.

"So the Jesuits are the hindrance," I replied. "Have they then any influence in commercial schools?"

"It takes the whole strength of the friends of

freedom here," he answered, "to help in keeping up the institution. We have, in a population of 20,000, about 400 priests and a large seminary for priests; that is, there is one Jesuit to every fifty people. You will soon see how things are in Italy. The country is a wonderful fruit with many big maggots. Millions flock hither, to delight themselves with the art-treasures and church buildings; but how many of them consider that just through these very things millions go to ruin, physically and mentally. The country is a workhouse, in which the Jesuits manage the kitchen. What *might not* Italy be, and what is she?"

"But your institute is free from the influence of the priests?" I asked. "Only in so far as that no religious instruction is given; that is a private matter. Catholics and Protestants Jews and people belonging to no sect—there are specimens of all, and they all get on with one another. But the snares are outside, in the hands of the Jesuits, who watch me with Argus eyes as an atheist, and lay traps for me. Just on that account I have to work with great caution, and need men who will support me. As I know your opinions, I hope that you will be my friend and comrade."

It was not long before I adapted myself pretty well to the new life. Every day, every hour indeed, brought me fresh knowledge, and if I often felt depressed at the want of a room to myself, with no salary for plenty of work, yet there were often hours in which I did not repent having gone out into the world. I had to make observations in school and society, in nature and national life, and to reflect upon

matters of which I should never have dreamt at home. I soon recognised the difference between German and Italian life, and that to educate according to German, and according to foreign, ideas, are two very different things. With every step I was obliged to throw off prejudices, and to trace out the causes of phenomena. But just on that account it was well with me. I had always felt that life is the best school of true education. At home I had worked as a link in the same chain ; now I found myself in an utterly strange life, whose every pulse-beat I must follow if I was to be in sympathy with it. The point was to understand foreign feelings and thoughts, in order to work at all. The more quickly I made progress in the Italian language, the easier it was to become acquainted with the people and their characteristics. I found help not only from the director and my Italian colleagues, but also from intercourse with the parents of some of my pupils. I recognised afresh that one must do all one can to understand the popular spirit, the people's nature. Thus I was obliged to reckon with circumstances, and to take things as they are, and not to look at them through foreign spectacles. In a word, what I gave to my pupils was in proportion to what I drew from their own lives. In spite of its utter simplicity my life became one of mutual benefit. As teacher and educator I recognised this to be of first moment. I always saw myself a learner ; and this the more, the better I understood how to arrange methods which took into account the variety of nationalities, and in which the pupil had to be regarded as an individual. I recognised that success depended upon myself. The pupils had not so much

to adapt themselves to me as I to them. So I was obliged to open the folds of their nature; mine was not a mechanical work, but self-adjustment to the individual. I could and must arrange a method of which many a professor has not an inkling. But just on that account I gained much for myself; my work as an educator enlightened myself. One must take part in an organisation for international training, in order to learn whether one is a common labourer or a master-builder. I should like to say this to all theorists, who fancy they can get rid of ideas by despising them. At home this plan raises many a one to be professor or school-manager; but such people would, in a foreign country, be just day labourers. Life makes one reflect; at any rate, there is no more difficult art than to weave threads of foreign life into a beautiful, harmonious whole. Until this day I have met but few who know the worth of this art.

In Bergamo I came to see that a natural educator must be a different man from one who, by his book-learning, claims the right to call independent teachers, "Utopians." Giving lessons is routine, and education is an art; but the highest art of all is to make nationalities and individualities into men. It is as far removed from school-drill as heaven is from earth.

Before I could make myself familiar with Italy's *chiaroscuro*, I had to dig down to the root of the tree, the Italian's own nature. My work led me naturally to this. I found there a fancy which outweighs thoughtful study; an enthusiasm which soon tires. The causes are to be found in the southern nature,



with which also are connected transgressions of discipline and morality. I had sad experiences. On the other hand there was no lack of pupils, who were intellectually and morally capable; indeed, I should say that in general the power of apprehension was greater in Italian than in German boys. But perseverance was rare. It was as in nature—rapid blossoming and rapid decay. Just on that account I exerted myself to act otherwise than at home; and first of all by gentleness. I saw that the overbearing spirit which is to be found in the North did ten times more harm in Italy than it does at home. The Italian is more sensitive; he is enraged by rough treatment; with love one can twist him round one's finger. A German police-inspector in Italy would soon be disposed of; the Italian wishes to act without compulsion, and for this reason Italy seems riper for a republic than the German nation. Degraded as is the aristocracy, there is valuable material latent in the people. It is not fair to call them lazy and indolent; on the contrary they are indefatigable, and frugal to an admirable degree. That one meets many idlers results from the want of work in commerce, trade, and industry. If Italy had at her disposal larger and more numerous water-sources and coalfields, and were she not devoured by the Church, she would certainly be one of the most flourishing of states. Even now culture is growing very considerably, and it cannot be doubted that the power of free ideas, innate in the Italian, will bring about great results. One must have lived with the people, in order to sympathise with them. To be sure, it is said the Italians are children; but

they are beautiful and original children ; and has not a child the advantage of being in the stage of development? This character has an enlivening influence, too, upon the foreigner. In Italy one becomes sooner free than in other lands. I understand why the poet Browning said that Italy had been his university.

What influence the Church exercises over the people one can understand only when one lives among them, and labours at education, because here traces of the most hidden influence are to be found. Very early in the morning a young priest made his appearance and took the boys to mass. The bigger boys tried to escape the wearisome duty, but did not succeed. None of the older pupils went, as their attendance was optional. And there were free-thinking parents, who put in their veto in favour of the younger scholars, and made the church-going a *fiasco*. Neither the Protestant pastor nor the Rabbi ever troubled the school with these attempts at coercion ; indeed the Protestant clergyman was tactful even in church affairs. He came to the school during examination time only ; and this he was not bound to do, because the institution eschewed all religious instruction. The Catholic church saw its mission in another light ; no priest put in an appearance at the examinations ; but wherever possible, they made their way into the houses, in order to warn the parents of the dangers of this education.

House servants are entirely under the surveillance of the Church ; their influence is great, and the consequences were most deplorable. Where servants are led by priests, there is a want of obedience to

masters. Dependents of the church understand the art of evasion. One observes this especially in Italy. There was an everlasting running to and fro between house and church. The disobedience was as great as the superstition. Coins, medals, and precious stones served as protection against magic, illness, and so on. The consecrated things were so holy, so precious, that the owners would not put them even for a moment into strange hands. It was often saddening to see how they gave their pence for worthless charms, images of saints, rosaries, consecrated candles etc., whilst a sick mother or invalid father had nothing to eat. Usually the authority of the Church was supreme over the women. There was no money for education or national culture; but for the Church there was always money; even a fortune which was lost to the heirs. Wherever a rich widow or old maid with money died, the priests were like carrion beetles round the body of an animal. Booty, booty! was the watchword.

The manufactures of Bergamo were inconsiderable; the town earned most by making stoneware and glass. On the whole, there was much poverty; as is always the case where there is a bishopric and a host of priests. The number of churches was great and their bells were ringing at all times, enough to drive one crazy. Wherever one walked or stood still one met church-goers and priests. Often crowds of people were encamped on the street before the overfilled church, in which thousands knelt, with the noise of bells and music and the smoke of consecrated combustibles around them. Probably for the greater number it was from habit and

custom, as being a kind of rendezvous. How often I felt a pang when I saw a dozen miserable people slip on to their knees in front of the church, begging for blessing and salvation. This could not have been, but that the gigantic power of the Church had obstructed the sources of life in the land and crushed down everything whence prosperity, culture, and freedom could blossom. Educated men troubled themselves little about the Church; they devoted themselves to business; in the meantime the priest, as family friend, became the domestic authority. Thus an ecclesiastical bringing-up was assured. A special point was made of sending the girls early to religious institutions, where the priests went in and out. The results were magnificent: churches and convents inherited millions. And what was left over for the education of the people, for school, for teachers, and for people's libraries? I met with schoolmasters who had an income of 300 francs a year, and who lived in houses where the windows were mended with paper. The teacher was a complete nonentity, a burden, an idler. While he was following his calling the pastor sat with the village magnate, or strolled with the baroness and countess, who are very numerous in Italy, through magnolia and cypress groves. The priests fought with all their might against the State-schools. "Down with education of the people!" was the cry. "Down with everything which lays the axe to the root of the Church and its sovereignty!" The longer I watched this hopeless state of things, the more it cut me to the heart. I was in a wonder-land full of beauty, and felt with the free men. It

is true, the freedom of the press was great ; but of what good is that in a land where 50 per cent. cannot read ?

In the country I saw neglected roads and bridges, bad tillage, and mortgaged land ; the poor everywhere, side by side with a few rich. The system was barbarous, the great landed proprietor, the priests' right hand, had numberless estates, which were put into the hands of a farmer. He kept countless families under him, who had to work like horses and oxen for small wages. In this way thousands toiled for their feudal lord on starvation wages, and he squandered the money at Paris and Nice. This system was the cancerous evil ; the masses remained in misery ; there was no way to raise their condition. Everywhere superstition with semi-starvation. I came to hovels where the children lay the whole day in cribs, or tied down on a heap of Indian corn, the parents having to earn money for their lord in the heat of the sun. One could understand that they wanted, at any rate, shelter for their little ones.

In one village I found a magnificent marble church. It was in a district which could pay no taxes ; the building had consumed 90,000 lire a sum, which (well employed) would have saved the district.

Once, on foot in the Alps round Bergamo, I found conditions which exceeded everything. The poverty was appalling, and the bareness of living such that I lived on two francs a day. For an egg I paid in one village a centime, and for a fowl thirty.

The mountain-people, who breed the famous Bergamask sheep, which are as large as calves, were almost uncivilised. In many villages they took me

for a heretic or a wizard. For example : In a high mountain-valley, where I was looking for minerals, I was pursued by peasants with sticks. A doctor told me that they chased me because it was a Sunday morning ; but perhaps they took me for a magician. In these mountains I learned what Church morals meant. I came upon shrines with images of saints, and a catalogue of those who had prayed there so and so many times. There all sins could be forgiven : fraud, theft, adultery, and so on, according to the number of pilgrimages and prayers. I did not bring home the most beautiful of the treasures which I had collected ; a box with double crystals was stolen in an hotel while I was at dinner ; and a gigantic ammonite, which I had hidden near the road, was likewise not to be found. Still, my journey was a success ; I had gained experiences, which led me to write an article for the *Vienna Agricultural Gazette*. It was my first paid article, and the payment refreshed me like a draught from a mountain rill.

I had little time for abstract study ; life occupied me entirely. I had many lessons to give, and made excursions with the young people, as my colleagues were ashamed to go through the town with the scholars. I kept up my private lessons daily, and the director took pains to give me instruction in Italian and French. French correspondence and conversation had become a necessity to me. Hugentobler was at home in the four chief languages and their literature, and was an excellent teacher. About this time I read in the periodical, "Pädagogium," an article on Italian schools, which struck

me, because my experiences had been different. True, I had not yet gained a thorough knowledge, but I had learnt much. I asked the director for his opinion.

"Things are not so," he replied, "a great deal of stupid stuff is written about our schools."

I informed Dr. Dittes (the editor) that the article was not in accordance with facts. He replied that I ought to write another article, but must not refer to this paper, for which he was indebted to a Genoese schoolmaster. I answered that I must first study the subject more, and would then write an article. It appeared under the title: "Concerning Italian Schools." Without knowing it, I had entered upon the sphere of pedagogical authorship. Once I was surprised by a remarkable meeting. The director told me that a professor (Zernecke) wished to speak to me. I saw before me a fine-looking man with noble features. A glance sufficed to make me feel in sympathy with him.

"Necessity brings me here," he said. "I have been unfortunate in Egypt. I am looking for a situation; but first of all I need money, on which account I wish to give a lecture here. Would you help me in this?"

"I will do what I can," I replied, "but success seems to me questionable. Who spends money for literary wants?"

However, the affair was a success. The lecture on Dante and Goethe found favour, and the lecturer earned a satisfactory sum. I should have had no occasion to make his further acquaintance, had he not invited me to accompany him to his hotel.

"This is the fourth time that I have been at Bergamo," he said. "The last time was with Garibaldi, under whom I served. I have still a memento of him," he added, fetching out of his portmanteau a piece of paper, which, in four or five lines in Garibaldi's handwriting, confirmed the statement, expressing Garibaldi's gratitude to the then officer for his help in the conflict with the Austrians.

"How did you come to Italy?" I asked.

"My life has been as varied as can possibly be imagined. But one thing I must tell you."

And he took me back to his bringing up, which had been in Italy, and then to the time which he had spent in German schools. He told me that he was the son of an Italian lady of high rank, and of a German railway-director. "German life did not suit me," he continued, "for there was Italian blood in my veins. I went to Rome and taught at a *liceo* there. Soon I became a worker on political papers, which were in close connection with the Ministry. Before long I had so many connections, in England too, that I threw off the school-master's gown and became a fighter for the unity of Italy."

Then he told me how he had been now here, now there, soldier under Garibaldi, as secretary to a political agitator, etc. Fate brought him to London and forced him to take a post as tutor. Then he received the offer to accompany an Englishman on a voyage round the world. After he had travelled through America and Asia he was again drawn to Italy, where he succeeded in obtaining a professor-



ship at Naples. He married, and lived happily. Then his wife was torn from his side by death. He went to Egypt and educated the son of a high official in Cairo. By an insurrection, which forced him to fly, he had lost position and property. His journals, kept for years, were burnt or stolen, and with difficulty he reached Italy, where he earned his living by lecturing. He spoke German, Italian, French, English, Spanish, and modern Greek; he was even master of dialects; he was a genius in languages, and had a phenomenal memory. What he had studied and observed he could never forget.

When I touched upon different regions of knowledge, and of life, he was at home in all, and his portmanteau contained a mass of literature, especially editions of the classics. When he spoke of great men, especially of his favourite, Leopardi, whose poems he had translated, and always carried about with him, he showed emotion.

"The worst is," he remarked, "that I shall never get an appointment again on account of my being a freethinker and a democrat. My views are so deeply rooted, that I can no longer subordinate myself. Are you a freemason?"

"No."

"Hugentobler is one, and I too. You must become one also. In Roumania, I founded the lodge at B. Now, when things are not going well with me, I can get some help from the masons. Do you read free-thinking papers?"

"I have no time, and as a schoolmaster one cannot do much."

"If you are not afraid of running risks then try

it, otherwise let it be. Whoever adopts the natural way of viewing the world must be of tough material."

As he was again in need of money to pass the frontier I lent him a sum. I did not expect repayment, or to meet the man again; but he was destined to cause me some bitter moments yet. There was indeed something unusual in him; he attracted me; a thousand times I thought of this wandering spirit, who with all his culture was not up to the mark. He was called to spread a sea of light; but he sank because he lost his moral balance. I met with disappointment, though a much slighter one, from a Thuringian, who thought a great deal about his coats and his necktie, with a rather empty head and no warmth of heart. He was a trained teacher, who talked much of Herbart's system; but was a proof that theory is different from practice. None of the pupils cared for him. His pleasure was with an expensive cigar in his mouth, to walk across the piazza, and sit for hours in the Café Central, under the impression that all the world, especially the fair sex, must be enraptured with him.

"I want thirty lire," he said once; "could you lend me the sum?"

I smiled. "You come to me? Do you not know that I am working without pay?"

"But perhaps you can manage it; it is only for a few days."

I happened to be able to fulfil his wish, and in a strange country one is doubly willing to help one's fellow countryman. How astonished was I the next morning when the director said to me:

Do you know the latest news? Signor Y. has

decamped. Here is a card from Milan. He promises you and me the sums he owes us, in a very short time." Of course, I never heard of him again.

At last the time came when I thought I must take a step forward in life.

"I understand," said Hugentobler. Advertise in the *Journal de Genève*, you will have a number of offers." I did so; but no great number came. Two offers there were. One came from Moscow, and this related to the education of one boy. The chief condition was perfect French conversation. If only on that account, I had to refuse; but I should not under any circumstances have gone to the east. I wished to become acquainted with civilised countries, although it is true that a brilliant income in Russia's sacred town somewhat tempted me. The other proposal was from Switzerland, on the part of a French lady. "I have two students in my house," she wrote, "who want to be prepared for Oxford and Cambridge. If you are suitable, and inclined for it, then come. You would have board and lodging free." The letter depressed me. "Am I to be again without money? Shall one post of endurance succeed another?" I said. "When I think of my schoolfellows, who have done nothing for their own deeper education, should I not be ashamed to take such a post?" On the other hand it would not do to refuse a capital opportunity of training for the profession and for life: "Free Switzerland; French family-life; Englishmen to educate!" That attracted me, I discovered a bright side to it, and when the mirror told me how wretchedly ill I was looking I decided to accept the offer, just in order to save my

threatened health by help of fresh air and German food.

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Our farewell was touching. The director knew that he was losing a friend, and that I was leaving him to his fate. The Jesuits are underminers, and my friend's edifice was soon to disappear. I foresaw it, and so a tear rolled down my cheek when I left him. But life is pain and pleasure. The sunshine was resting on mountain and valley, and the Lake of Como bore the joy of life on its waves. The steamer glided over blue-green depths, and sea-gulls accompanied it. Behind me lay Italy, which had given me little—and much ; before me free Switzerland, whither I was journeying.

In Colico I mounted the celebrated diligence for the Splügen Pass. My *vis-à-vis* was a stout priest, Dekan (dean) of Chiavenna. He at once began a conversation which lasted until midnight, when he alighted at his parish. We spoke about people and landscape, literature and art. He had a rare intellect, which can but seldom be said of an Italian priest ; the majority of the inferior clergy are as poor in mind as in worldly possessions. The valleys were shrouded in darkness, only the mountain-tops became illumined. It became lighter, and the forms of the mountains were more sharply defined. The magic of the mountain scenery captivated me. The higher the horses brought us, the more the veiling mist disappeared. At last the sun shone on the road and

day began. The solitude of the heights went to my heart. The drive became magnificent, above all on the Via Mala. Before long I passed through interesting places on the way to old Chur, and the railway brought me towards evening to my place of destination, which was Ragatz. Madame Rochat lived in a pretty house on the market-place of the famous town. I pulled the bell, and a neatly-dressed servant girl said: "I suppose I may announce Dr. Haufe? The family are at table." I had scarcely reached the stairs when a lady came to meet me. She received me as if I had been an old acquaintance, and led me into the salon. I was astonished at the appearance of everything, I felt as if I were in the land of dreams. "But, sir," she began, "you wear a beard! I thought that you were quite a young man like Mr. Matthews and Mr. Griffith, the two English gentlemen."

"Why should I not wear a beard?" I answered, "It is a very small one," I added jokingly.

"My dear doctor," she answered, full of animation in spite of her grey locks, "I am embarrassed, very much embarrassed. Heavens, I have led you to take a false step. Dear me, how embarrassed I am!"

"Pray tell me why?" I asked.

"It will not do for you to be with me without salary! I do not know how I got the idea that you were so very young. I ought not to have allowed myself to make you the offer."

"You need not be troubled about it," I answered, "it is quite my own doing. Besides, I have come hither to gain experience, and to perfect myself in French, in your house."

“Oh, how delightful!” she cried. “You shall study literature with me. I am sorry that I must give you such a small room,” she said, and took me into it.

At last a chamber fit for a human being! I slept that night as I had not slept for years. The next day I noticed that I was in a refined household; the luncheon was quite luxurious. My pupils consumed quantities of butter and honey. The elder one was a fat young man of twenty-four with a moustache. I noticed that his thoughts and meditations were wholly given to material things; he meant to study theology. The younger was eighteen years old; he was thickset and muscular, and sharp eyes looked out from his broad, severe face. He meant to study law. After breakfast they two and I had a conference. I got them to lay their aims and requirements before me, and drew from them both an account of their studies hitherto. As I did not understand English, and they neither German nor Italian, I was obliged to take French as the language of instruction. Things went better than I had expected. I set to, worked out a study-plan, and the very same day the work began. At first I taught the two together; but soon saw that the elder was very backward compared to the younger. He was of an indolent nature, and so slow of apprehension that I was obliged with him to take algebra and geometry from the beginning, that we might not have continually to retrace our steps. Madame Rochat sent for me to the salon; she wanted to know what I thought of the young men.

“You are giving them Greek and Latin, too?” she asked.

"No, I am only teaching mathematics and natural science. Is there no one here who would teach the languages?"

"Perhaps Mr. N., our pastor, would do so," she replied. "It is a pity that you cannot undertake everything. Now, tell me, how is it with your religion? Are you a Protestant?"

"I, a Protestant, why?"

"My pupils are so. And one more question, are you religious?"

"May I ask why you wish to know that?"

"My pupils have to go to church every Sunday, that is a settled thing. And I am pious, too," she added, smiling. "I belong to an old family, which came to Switzerland at the time of the Huguenots. Devoutness is a tradition in our family. Only my present husband is an exception; he is an unbeliever, a man without heart. It is sad that I must tell you this. He only comes to meals; otherwise he is alone. He is addicted to morphia, and that through dread of work, through laziness and godlessness. Now you know how things are with me. I take pupils in order to support myself; also to distract my thoughts and to keep my mind quiet."

I saw here a bit of life! I was sorry to be obliged to reveal myself.

"Madame, I am neither pious nor do I go to church," I replied. "But I think it is not at all necessary that I should go to church with the pupils. They are old enough; it is time they were independent."

"Oh, no," she said, "their parents make a point of it. Devoutness is still to be found in England; I

am afraid your example will be hurtful. The young men will say: '*Voilà*, Monsieur Rochat and the doctor are alike; why should we go to church?'"

"The matter is not so serious," I interposed soothingly, "the pastor gives them Latin and Greek lessons; the parents will like that; they will understand that he has at the same time some priestly control over them. And as for me, I can only say that I never touch upon religion, and shall never do anything to rob them of their belief. And one thing more; I shall try to get on as fast as possible with them, and do all in my power to make them happy in their work and that they may feel that they are well guided. You will see your anxiety will prove quite unfounded."

Madame Rochat seemed calmer. "I should be happy," she rejoined, "if all went well. You do not know what a bad influence Monsieur Rochat has had already, for he drags everything through the mud, and hurts the most sacred feelings. Oh, atheists have much on their conscience. Believe me, *such* atheists are worse than the bigots, who, at any rate, do not rob the young of their pure thoughts."

"I assure you," I answered, "I am not of that kind. Perhaps I have greater influence without directly teaching religion than many have who try to educate the young by 'religious' means."

"How happy I should be if it were so," she cried. "My wish is to keep my conscience clear, so that I could say to the parents, 'I give you back your sons unharmed!'"

Before long I had no trouble with church and religion; Madame Rochat recognised that I was a



guide to her charges, and, perhaps besides, that religion and morality have nothing to do with each other.

I put all my strength into bringing on my pupils, and revealing nature and life to them in our leisure hours. Our plan was to work hard, and make the best of the leisure-time; in winter, with sledge-drives and long walks; in spring, with excursions for the sake of study. I myself had the double advantage of learning method as well as human nature while teaching. I was charmed to have English types before me, so as to enter into their likings and peculiarities. It became clearer than ever to me that one cannot learn to know men through books, and that treatises on psychology are good for nothing. The time was now come in which I busied myself no more with books. I was surfeited with books, and wished now only to study human beings. And for that there was plenty of opportunity: through my pupils I made myself acquainted with English character; through the family with French; and in the place itself and on expeditions with that of the eastern Swiss. On free days I visited many districts in order to get an insight into foreign life. Whenever there was an opportunity I visited a school, a meeting, a festival, and wrote about it. On the whole I had expected more from the Swiss school system than I found; when at a distance one is always apt to apply a false standard. For example, I had neither considered the utter seclusion of many valleys, nor the effects of a plurality of languages, nor the religious and political differences. It also took me some time to

get used to the people. Often I admired their intelligence and sturdiness, but missed the poetical strain. This seemed strange to me when nature was so rich in beauty. I found the people like the mountains—sharply defined, rough and angular; natures in which common sense predominated; at the same time with marked striving after freedom and money-getting. Sometimes I came to know original natures, far removed from the levelling spirit of town life. In many respects I found traits of likeness between the eastern Swiss and the English; both must be known for some time before one can appreciate them. The contrast between Italian life—indisposed for seriousness—and the sobriety of the Swiss character was too great for me to be soon enraptured with the latter.

Madame Rochat continued to be amiability itself; she was like a mother to me, and scarcely a day passed in which our French studies were missed; she took the opportunity of making me acquainted with the French spirit. It gave her especial pleasure to prepare me little surprises. For instance, at Christmas she gave me a large cake, stuffed with ducats. I took it all for a joke, until she informed me, full of merriment, that the ninety francs were the fee which a publisher had sent me. I was the more pleased as my money anxieties were endless, and I was again looking forward to the future with anxious forebodings. In spite of that, I kept firmly to my plan of bringing my pupils as soon as possible to their goal; indeed, I was able to accomplish this half a year earlier than I had expected. Before the summer came they went to England, where one

of them began his studies at Oxford, the other at Cambridge. Thereby I myself became free from responsibility, so I took up my staff and travelled westwards into French Switzerland.

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Unfortunately I had reckoned without my host. No wonder, for I did not yet understand life. Wherever I came, hoping to find some post at a school, I was told that it was a most unfavourable time. "Come again in the autumn!" they said. My situation became critical, I was without money; but the desire to learn about French schools kept me on French soil. At last I had recourse to a cousin, a schoolmaster in Saxony, and he, who had himself gone through many a struggle, lent me a sum of money without security. As I looked at him—for he had worked his way up without outside help—a feeling of humiliation seized me. But what was I to do? I found myself in a labyrinth; I hated to turn back; and yet I could see before me nothing but a road without end or aim. Days of mental suffering came; but the strong desire to gain knowledge of men and of the world without avoiding difficulties supported me. I determined to remain faithful to myself.

My aim was directed to the Lake of Geneva. While I tarried on the beautiful northern shore, and my glance swept over the rocky heights to the south, I was again seized with the feeling that I must work in the service of the free education of

man. I tried to find a suitable post, but in vain. On the shores of the lake there flourish, indeed, plenty of educational establishments, but they did not want me. For all that, I had the chance of getting to know many of them, and I found, alas ! that the training of human beings sinks into a commercial undertaking, because people must earn money. The surroundings were often so wretched that I noticed them in print. Once I went into an establishment which was picturesquely hidden in a green mantle of ivy. I asked for the director. I was shown into the salon, and there the disillusion began. I started when the handle of the door came off in my hand, and still more when one of the legs of the chair upon which I was about to sit, collapsed.

The director questioned me about my course of study, and took me round the house and garden, where I gained the impression of great disorder. I must have seemed an acquisition to him, for he offered me the position of factotum ; I was to teach everything imaginable, and also superintend " religion " and the excursions. When I had explained my point of view, he remarked : " Yes, if you take that ground, you will find nothing in French Switzerland to suit you. Private schools even are dependent upon the Church, and there is a business side even to the education question."

I had had enough ; I took up my stick and hat. I saw that that spot of earth, on which Rousseau had dwelt, had but few educational establishments which were free from the commercial spirit, and not one which laboured in the spirit of free education. I did not find what I sought and I began to be restless.

After I had wandered from place to place for five or six weeks I went to Geneva, where I visited the institutes of Thudichum and Haccius. I did not get a place; but I gained experience, and made acquaintance with an Englishman named Stanley, agreeing to give him German while he gave me English lessons. I managed to get an insight into the private schools through Dr. Haccius, who had been a friend of my uncle Jentzsch. When I spoke of setting up an educational institute founded on free principles, he entreated me seriously not to think of it. "For that one needs a great deal of money," he said, "and if you should ever have that, I should advise you even more strongly not to think of it." In the house of Professor Delaroche I found excellent board and lodging. I was in the company of medical men and philologists, who were studying languages at the university. The intercourse was most pleasant, chiefly with Prussians, Germans, Armenians, and Greeks. In a needy Armenian I found an especially splendid man. My sympathy for him grew, when I heard with what courage he had overcome a sea of difficulties, in order, if possible, to solve a problem in connection with petroleum, which was to make a rich man of him with one stroke.

"Russia is a torture-chamber," he exclaimed once, when I was with him in his attic-room. "Despotism and priestcraft have ruined everything. Our land might be a Paradise; but everything that the State does is calculated to destroy every human impulse. We wished to have a university at Tiflis, but none is built. We were ready to contribute a hundred

thousand roubles, but things remain as they were; they will not do it, even if everything goes to rack and ruin."

"And why not?"

"The State dreads enlightenment. The treasures of the Caucasus are to remain buried, the people of my land must dwell in darkness, and it is that, just that, which makes Nihilists of us!"

I worked daily with Monsieur Delaroche at French conversation and literature; he also helped me to translate into French, a treatise on "The Training of the Will," which I sent to the Parisian *Revue pédagogique*, without ever seeing it or hearing of it again. All my letters were unsuccessful.

Delaroche was himself indignant at it, and took the opportunity to storm at the unsatisfactory state of things in France.

"France is but half a republic," he said. "I know it, being a Frenchman myself. I was brought up in France and fled hither."

"For political reasons?" I inquired.

"I was in a seminary for priests," he answered, "and as I noticed that they wanted to cripple me I fled, and that was my salvation. I found a dear wife, and we were able to make a home. Formerly I was a priest, now I am a man!"

In the society of a free spirit I felt myself more and more free. I became convinced that it is no empty phrase that in Switzerland a freer spirit breathes than elsewhere. I noticed it in the place where Rousseau first saw the light, and where Calvin lived. I met with liberal-minded people, and often forgot that money cares were pressing upon me.

Just about this time, when I was beginning to be less reserved, complaining letters and hints of dissatisfaction came from Germany. "You will spoil your future," wrote a time-server, who had got on. "I am afraid," wrote another, "that you are going astray." "We don't want any more contributions," wrote an editor. These were the sentiments that echoed across to me from the German forest. Not a single one wrote: "Persevere; go forward quietly; study men and nations; the results cannot fail to appear." Not a word, only the voices of mean souls, who fear to go out to sea if a breeze is blowing. I began to understand Germany; I saw that we have thinkers and poets, but no national liberty, so that those who preach truth and freedom are left to starve. In the meantime I continued my university studies, visited schools and educational establishments, and wrote about them. At the university I made the acquaintance of Pictet, Marc Monnier, Karl Vogt, and the head of the observatory, of whose kindness I several times took advantage. Of these Raoul Pictet interested me the most. He had succeeded in bringing oxygen and hydrogen into liquid and solid form.

At the house of Karl Vogt, the meritorious apostle of freedom, I also met lady students. The German students were without exception philologists. They kept far too much to themselves, and as they were, to begin with, overladen with learned rubbish, they were of no use in practical matters. It was the old story, school had spoiled them for life. The roughness of the academic youth, I said to myself, will last as long as there are not boarding-houses for

scholars kept by thoroughly educated men, who devote themselves entirely to their boarders. The mistake of putting one's sons in the hands of poor tailors and shoemakers, old widows, and the like must be put an end to. My idea found favour, and the consequence was that several boarding-houses were set up. Unfortunately the matter has not yet extended far. People live in the belief that all is right, when the boy is at school.

When I had become more familiar with the educational system of French Switzerland I wrote to Dr. Kornemann in Paris, who had an establishment in the Avenue Malakoff, to inquire whether I might share his work. Then I received from Coburg the news that he was passing through Geneva, and would discuss the matter with me personally. But he had to inform me that Government was mistrustful of foreigners and required a petition, which, if I recollect rightly, cost me 170 francs, without any certainty of success.

"I will make the acquaintance of France without paying a tax to the State," thought I, and it really seemed as though I was under a lucky star. My application to a Monsieur R. who had a most remarkable institution, was answered in so attractive a way that I decided to go to Paris, especially as he wrote for me to come at once. I arrived with a few francs in my pocket, trusting the siren's voice, which gave me the prospect of an income that might reach 500 francs a month.



I was in Paris, and very greatly was I impressed by it. I looked back and thought that my life until now had been like a spider's in a corner. Paris had its effect upon me: in the midst of luxury—poverty; in the midst of enjoyment—misery; idleness side by side with toil, and peace with conflict. These things touch every one. The noise of the crowd; the glitter by day as by night; the enormous traffic—everything loomed large about me, so that I thought I could not endure it for long. I felt myself in a new world, and hurried to see my principal. He had the control of a series of institutions, in which old and young were instructed in almost all branches of knowledge and technical work, and, at the same time, in their native tongue as the language of intercourse. He had control over a great staff of teachers from all countries. Whilst most of them were half-starved he filled his own pockets, for we had often to pay him as much as half our earnings and to rent rooms from him at fifty, sixty, and more francs the month.

When I entered the showily furnished reception-room I found that the man had not time even to look at me. "Come again in the afternoon!" he said with condescension; and when I went in the afternoon he said, "Come again to-morrow morning!" I saw that I was caught in a trap. Not till after much talking, after I had given up my papers, and was exhausted and without means, did he appoint me a place in one of his houses in the Rue de l'Odéon. I said "a place"; in reality it was a room without a bed, for which I was to pay sixty francs a month. There was not a sous of fixed salary, and unless I had the good fortune to give private lessons, half the proceeds of

which went to my principal, I should be without bread, and yet be bound to meet the rent of my room.

Disappointment followed upon disappointment. When I entered the house I found my predecessor, named Dornbusch, ill with typhus, and as he did not want to go to the hospital, but preferred remaining in his, that is in my room, I found myself obliged to lodge in a neighbouring house. And this was not all. When I saw that he was insufficiently looked after I became his nurse, although the doctor seriously dissuaded me. At last, when Dornbusch had recovered and set off for Spain, I could at least move into a room ; somewhat better, although it was—as those of all the masters were—my schoolroom, too. My life was far from pleasant. As sub-director I had the duty of inspection, and of collecting and paying out money. Monsieur R. even required me to get his enormous placards displayed at restaurants, cafés, and hôtels ; and as professor I was obliged to run from pillar to post in order to teach men, women, and children, of all nations. It was impossible for me to follow my own plans. Although I gave instruction—often highly paid—I had to dine at a creamery. My indignation grew from day to day. My friend Stanley, formerly at Geneva, Mr. Brown from London, Edward Herboth, a north-German who had been employed in England, and other friends and acquaintances suffered as I did, and knew as little as I how to amend the evil. When it became unbearable, and my principal had only a shrug of the shoulders for me, when I could recover neither my testimonials nor a sum of six francs

owing to me, I moved to a room in the wretched little Passage du Commerce on the Boulevard St. Germain.

I kept my word and wrote a raging article against the "Association internationale de professeurs," in the "Allgemeine deutsche Lehrer-Zeitung," which ended with these words: "Who of my German colleagues could help feeling what a harmonious, intellectual, and stimulating life is offered to a cultured man by the above-mentioned company? It is to be hoped that the wish of so many inquirers to throw themselves into the arms of such uncertainty, toil, and selfish money-making, will die out. I take the opportunity of speaking more fully about this, because in spite of the revelations on the part of German ex-members, German teachers are still caught by this 'Association' like flies in a spider's web." I was now free from the respectable principal, who understood how to squeeze the most out of the best teachers; but not free from the struggle for existence. I had to seek for work without my testimonials. Happily the beginning was made easier by the assistance of a friend, who after many struggles had obtained a modest post in Germany.

It would give a far from pleasant impression were I to relate in full how cautious I had to be, and what impressions I received. I had to teach polytechnic students, youths leaving the gymnasium, and school-boys; governesses, officials, workmen, and children; and a variety of nationalities, too—Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, Germans, Spaniards, Russians, Greeks, Dutchmen, Brazilians, Armenians. My mind was at full strain; it meant keeping

always up to the mark, or nobody would have had anything to do with me. In the midst of the struggle it became at last possible for me to attend lectures at the Sorbonne, especially those of Ernest Renan, and also some on French literature, and the disputations of Père Hyacinthe, whose eloquence and frankness with regard to the undermining work of the Jesuits inspired me with admiration. I also found time to busy myself with the Parisian school-system, to go to meetings, to read, to visit the country and historic places, even to give lectures. I worked like a horse; I wanted to gain insight into French life and to train myself into independence of judgment, so as to meet mere theorists with good weapons. I was full of enthusiasm for the freedom, the growing culture of France, for the many humane institutions which light up the land like sunshine, and I came across people who understood how to enjoy themselves. But the hatred of Germany made me clench my fist; I had more than once reason to withdraw from quarrels. For instance, in an hotel, where they had made me out to be a Prussian, I gave my name an accent in order to rid myself of the mob. On the other hand, I heard, for instance, from the lips of a lawyer, an author, a secretary, that I was personally esteemed though my nation was hated. There were scenes, too, in the street, *e.g.*, before the windows of an art-shop, which people wanted to smash, because a war picture was displayed. "Revenge" inspired old and young, and I cited examples of this in a series of articles: "Educational Matters of the Present Day in France." This fierce hatred of Germany was, however, cherished in Paris only;

wherever else I went, in the country, I met peace-loving citizens. But Paris is France, and therefore the seat of war; and it will continue so as long as there are dictators and deluded mobs. It must, however, to the honour of France, be said, that in a short time she has accomplished wonders, if one but thinks of the transformation of the educational system, the separation of the school from the Church, and the raising of the status of teachers, reforms compared with which the reform in Germany is child's-play. How deplorable is our conception of the university compared to that of the French! Whilst with us only males can enter who have passed a certain examination, and are supported by their father's purse, in Paris one sees men and women, the man in his blouse and the workman's wife—the *alma mater* opens her doors to every one. That is freedom. And the same spirit breathes in people's libraries, people's museums, people's unions, people's newspapers—France is still the artery of the future. These are comforting facts for all who can appreciate free, intellectual life.

It was at this time that the idea came to me of a reform by means of children's games. Life in the Parisian sea of houses led me to it. My treatise "On the Value of Children's Games" appeared, alas! too late; for almost at the same time a magistrate, Hartwich, had brought the question before the public. But people began at least to take notice of the matter. To-day children's games have been treated of by many writers on education, without being exactly combined with schools.

I wanted to make the school, a school of life; to

set it free from antiquated methods and the teaching of dogmas ; but I soon recognised the impossibility of realising my ideas. On the one hand I lacked clearness of (theoretic) basis ; on the other, I felt it would be necessary to have the help of a more experienced schoolmaster. But it seemed possible to carry out one thing—a work on united organisation. I had the subject at my fingers' ends ; I only wanted time to write it down. Then once—it was a cold evening, and I had again gone without dinner—I seated myself at the table and wrote and wrote. And when evening came again I consigned my treatise to the post ; “Fundamental Thoughts on a New United Organisation of the German School System, with especial Reference to Secondary Schools,” was the title. Hunger had set me dreaming ; I dreamt of the ducats which the publisher would send me, and how I should run to a restaurant and eat until I was satisfied. Well, I should have starved outright if I had been obliged to wait until the money came ! Four years passed before Dr. Dittes published the treatise. “By request of the author, we testify that this treatise was for the most part written in the year 1882. May it contribute towards clearing up of this burning question of the day,” he wrote in a footnote. I became vexed about my work because of Dr. Dittes' opinion that it was premature. I believe that in the world of ideas there is no such word as premature. “Forwards” is my watchword ; we need lights ; if they shine a long way off they help to illuminate the darkness. Of course, to-day, all my vexation has disappeared.

My prospects became wretched. My receipts for private lessons and literary work were not sufficient to cover the most modest expenses. For a translation, for instance, which occupied me a fortnight and gave me much trouble, I got only thirty francs, and many of my efforts were not rewarded with a centime. For instance, Lindner begged me to do something for his encyclopedia ; but I did not receive a kreuzer for it, and I answered numerous applications from teachers and governesses without being repaid the postage. Besides this, half-starved Germans came to me, doctors and the like, and offered me cloak and umbrella if I would help them. "I am myself half-starved," I answered again and again. But my optimism continued ; it even was so strong that to a Leipzig publisher, who had presented his printing staff with something like 100,000 marks (£5000), but reduced the fees of us his contributors, I cheerfully replied, "No matter, I will work for two marks a page ; but the cause must not be endangered." I could bear everything where the cause was concerned. Once I lived for many days on bread and chestnuts. No one would lend me anything, not even the house-porter's wife, whose children I had often pleased with little presents—"I never lend," she said, with a smile.

What was I to do ? I had no credit in the whole of Paris, so I shrank from approaching my old benefactors. "Must I pawn my brother's ring ?" Necessity drove me to it, I pawned it for five francs and could not redeem it. My state of mind became alarming. I cursed society, religion, and life, and went out into the night, into the mist along the

bank of the Seine, where many a one had found peace. "You have suffered up to this time; you have been plundered; and after you have lived like a dog, will you die like a dog?" With such thoughts I wandered by the river side, despairing of everything that had hitherto given me courage, until I was brought back to my senses by the voice of pupil, a student of medicine.

The next day fate willed that I should be surprised by a visit of which I had never dreamed. The father of my English pupil in East Switzerland a barrister, had come with his son to Paris. He, who had never written me a word of thanks felt grateful to me. I do not know how he got my address, but he fetched me in a carriage to dine with them at the Hôtel du Louvre. He drove me through the town with his son, and we visited the international exhibition and the opera. "I hope you will go to London," he said; "you ought to know England. Make my house your own." These were his farewell words, and I have not forgotten them; for my experience, as a rule, has been that people express their thanks, if they feel any, by writing a few lines. It was fortunate that at this time a sum of money came in, which determined me to travel at once to Germany in order to take the first paying situation I could get, and later to visit England. I knew too much of the want which prevails among German teachers in London and how they are robbed by agents into whose hands they fall, to venture on transferring my struggle from Paris to London. I regretted this, but my spirit seemed broken and my body scarcely capable



of resistance. Even the very last day brought a disappointment. My landlady, whose son I had coached in German — gratis — for the military academy in St. Cyr, presented an outrageous supplementary bill. I paid it, and left Paris without regret. When I arrived in the Schwarzwald I was in low spirits; I found myself under the necessity of procuring a shelter, and was more than ever filled with the thought of starting a school. The words of Dr. Haccius were ringing in my ears; but in the idyllic woods, where the fir-trees rustle, I said to myself: "Here is the place where you and your friend Herboth should found an educational establishment, broader and freer than Pestalozzi's, such as does not yet exist anywhere." It remained a dream. People give millions for monasteries and churches, but who will give anything for the idea of educating man? So I sought a post through the newspapers, and three offers were made me. The one had much that was attractive, for a neglected boy, son of a consul-general in the south, was to be educated alone. But I had to decline, I could not consent to bind myself for three years. The second offer concerned the education of the children of a German residing at Cannes. On receiving a telegram I travelled to Basle, in order to confer with the father. Everything seemed settled, when he asked me how I should give the religious instruction. I answered that I could not give it.

"You mean to say that you are no friend of religion," he answered, looking at me.

"Not that; but I no longer approve of Church education."

"You mean that you are an atheist?" he inquired further.

"Not so; but I cannot teach where I have no inward calling."

He paid my travelling expenses, and I left the hotel to betake myself to a poor village at the foot of the Blauen, a mountain in the southern Schwarzwald, where I—for fate is ironical!—took the post of tutor in a parsonage, after arranging that I should be excused from attending church.

It was humiliating for me, who possessed such rich experiences, to find myself in a parsonage with a monthly salary of twenty marks, to teach the three sons of the pastor and two boarders, one French the other English. The clerical master of the house was not ashamed to pay an educator and teacher the wages of a cook. Oh, no! he was like a thousand others who look upon a teacher as a lackey. But that I found an interesting field of work, the five lads being original and affording me a study of character, I should have run away. It is no easy matter to live with people who put on a mask of Bible belief and deceive every one. Yet I remained longer than I could have thought possible. But in the service of the cause I wrote the article: "Nine Months in a German Parsonage."

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All at once the aspect of things changed. I read that a schoolmaster was wanted as head of the German school in Venice. Within a few weeks I received the

welcome news that I had been selected from some fifty candidates, among whom was a university professor. So my lot was cast, and I went to Italy for the second time, and with a salary of 1400 francs a year. Unfortunately my work was not calculated to further my projects. The school was a German one, and as always where there are two Germans there are three opinions; and as a German has no money, or, at any rate, none to give, it had become a veritable Cinderella of schools. Thanks especially to idle quarrelling, it was, more than ever, a failure. The chief error lay in the fact that the school was for the service of Protestantism instead of being for the service of humanity. The consequence, was that pupils, interest, and funds, were all wanting.

In Venice the school was not known! I seldom met a Venetian who had ever heard of it. I found that the German, even when abroad, retains much of his unbusiness-like habit of mind. What interest could be taken in the school by a committee two members of which were childless, and the third and fourth had only grown-up children? If one also considers the stroke of genius—which put everything upon the basis of creed—one easily sees why it was a failure. And this occurred much sooner than the committee had expected; indeed, as it happened, I had earlier knowledge of the approaching collapse than some of the members. One trait of character was shown in their not inviting to their meetings me, the head of the school. Is it not ridiculous that in school matters the teacher should be set aside? All had votes; the teacher only was of no account. When I advised a member to apply to the “German School

Association," I found to my amazement that he had never heard of it. The German school in Venice died of the Germans.

I spoke in a teacher's newspaper as follows : " After existing for six years the German school in Venice has collapsed. The interest shown in it was always weak, which is due to the weak national feeling evinced by the overpowering majority of Germans abroad ; to this the school-commission at Venice forms no exception." I threw light on the question, also, in an article " On the Question of German Schools Abroad, " as also in Dr. Müller's book, " German Schools Abroad." It may be remarked by the way that I have lost my enthusiasm for the " German School Association," after larger experience ; and that I see in the matter a struggle with elementary forces of nature. I am, of course, stigmatised as a cosmopolitan and no patriot. My stay at Venice was a time of active work. It seemed as if the time had come for me to emerge from my shell, to free myself from scientific prejudices. I found mountains of nonsense, especially in the field of pedagogy. It became clearer to me that high officials, and especially the highest of all, have nothing to do with " natural education " ; indeed, that progress takes always nature's way, from below upwards—from the depth of the masses to the heights of humanity.

First of all I was busy with the question whether mathematics require a special talent. Soon I found encouragement in a treatise on an exchange of ideas of modern philologists, and felt I must express my own view, which Dr. Dittes declared to be very adequately done, thereby giving me courage. Especially

was I encouraged by the above-mentioned writer's criticism of my treatise on "Italy's Present Culture," which drew from him exceptional commendation. I also sent contributions to the "Austrian School Messenger," a series of articles on "Educational Achievements and Omissions in Italy," and a work on "The Fundamental Thoughts of Pestalozzi and Froebel, and their Realisation."

Then all at once, towards the close of the school-year, when it began to be hot, and the holidays were close at hand, the thought of writing a book passed through my mind. It was not ambition or vanity, but bitter pain that filled me. When at the Teachers' college I had vowed to expose its abuses. And now, when I had seen how mistaken the training of teachers is, I resolved to disclose everything without fear. So I set to, and wrote "A Schoolmaster's Recollections of his Youth," by Dr. John Smith. The work was one-sided; written with a purpose. What I wanted was to bring about an inquiry into The teachers' colleges, and in order not to betray myself, I inserted many imaginary details about personal matters. Unhappily I was discovered just where I had wished not to be. The director of my own College and the first master, both theologians out and out, vented their venom on me. The one mourned to the close of his career over the sorrow caused him by one who went astray; the other stormed against me as a bird that fouled its own nest. He was the same who at the fifty years' jubilee of the foundation of the college, under the auspices of the Minister of Public Worship, made a mediæval speech about religion as the centre of the training of

teachers. That there was no one found to stigmatise this speech as it deserved cannot astonish us, considering the dependence of teachers.

From my very innocent book I had hoped for quite a different effect, viz., a practical result, an impulse towards reform. Nevertheless, my book opened the eyes of many. One praised its objective interest, because ample space was given to the discussion of matters of educational science, and especially that a most valuable light had been cast upon the condition of foreign schools; and another called it a brightly written book, which gave more than the title led one to expect. Unhappily a bitter after-taste was not wanting to this first production of mine. I had made no agreement with the publisher, so that to get my fee I must call in the help of a lawyer. After the German school was buried I continued my work, with enjoyment, in the house of a Russian councillor of state, von Wolkoff, formerly professor at the university of Odessa. I found something to work upon, for Wolkoff was a man who attacked the educational question with great originality; and his boys were so natural that I worked with enthusiasm. In fact they soon reached a degree of proficiency which generally only elder scholars attain.

Wolkoff had familiarised himself with botany, as also with painting, at which he laboured with admirable perseverance. It was a pleasure to visit his house, where Richard Wagner and others were at home, and he brought me also to an understanding of Wagner's music; but I found a more intimate friend in Dr. Moritz Brosch. Retired from the world he makes researches in archives, and gives himself

up to quiet intellectual work. His books on the history of the Popes ; Lord Bolingbroke and the Whigs and Tories of his time ; Oliver Cromwell and the Puritan Revolution ; and others have found noticeable recognition among experts in these subjects. Absolute simplicity and freedom from assumption, with rare modesty, are the personal virtues of this man, who knows how to estimate the world. I consider myself happy in having had a share in leading into the way of art-study his son, whom school-pedants had set down as an idiot. The boy is now on the way to be a good painter. When he sent me his portrait, painted by himself, I cried : " It is a mercy that the school did not break you to pieces ! " How many talents have been crushed by defective education !

As often before, I had an opportunity in Venice of seeing how German governesses were robbed ; blind trust and want of enlightenment caused them countless disappointments. In a teachers' paper I attacked one of the greatest sinners, an agency-office, of which I personally had had experience, and which once more had entrapped a governess. I wished to expose the swindle and to prevent the shedding of tears. But how astonished was I when I read in a Vienna paper, one morning on the Piazza S. Marco, that I had been serving up to the public fabrications of my own. I asked myself, in vain, why people took the part of the agencies rather than of the governesses. The matter roused me ; I answered with an article : " Experiences, not Views, of Life Abroad. " The shot aimed by the paper which made itself advocate of the agencies missed

its mark, letters of thanks from all quarters came in; indeed Dr. Kreyenberg confirmed the scandalous tales, and advised me to go bravely forward; and the "Association of Christian Governesses" made me an honorary member. I was especially gratified by the fact that a certain Schwartz founded an advertising sheet for tutors and governesses, in order to put an end to the swindling of many agencies. I now wrote a series of articles in the interest of governesses, and sent an article on "The Governess Problem, and Suggestions for its Solution," to the "German Scholastic Paper." The consequence was, that I had a large correspondence to work off, and rejoiced when I had done with it. However, my rest did not last very long. Filled with the conviction that our literature for the young consisted mostly of wares manufactured for sale, and in the interests of money-makers and pietists, I published an appeal: "On the Reform of Literature for the Young." I asked for united effort in establishing a "Young People's Library," in accordance with true ideas of training, that should instil healthy ideas into the young. Many people offered help, among them well-known authors of children's books; but what I had not thought possible took place—no publisher was to be found; indeed, one scholastic paper entered the lists against me.

I should never have known it if Professor Zerneck had not one day come to my room with the paper in his pocket, crying, full of indignation: "Do you know how they are treating you? There, read!"

I could not believe my eyes. A leading article on



me as a man who makes "Tabula rasa!" The attack ended with diatribes against the "Man of the Lagoons"; and, in cowardly fashion, was signed "Major." Now the writer of this was a distinguished man, editor and printer of the paper! His name is Christian Jessen. I esteem him to-day more than most schoolmasters, for he bravely took up the cudgels against priestcraft and the oppression of teachers.

"It really troubles me very little," I replied. "Any one who does not know me may calumniate me; I make no reply to such attacks." And so things remained, but for ten years I kept the thorn in my flesh, until I talked out the matter with Jessen himself in his own room.

Unfortunately Zernecke was again in want, and conjured me to help him to a situation. As it had often happened in my life I was better able to help others than myself. A few days before, Director D., in North Germany had offered me a post as substitute; but as, for various reasons, I could not decide to go, I thought of proposing my colleague, who had excellent testimonials. How pleased I was when shortly after he was accepted. All seemed to be going on well, when I received the terrible news that he had been dismissed because he was a drinker of the worst sort. I was dejected; though I had acted in good faith, I had compromised myself. One evening, when the rain was coming down in torrents, there was a knock at my gloomy house in the Calle San Gallo—it was Zernecke. A thrill of dismay went through me, I received him with a storm of reproach, which he had not expected from me. He

had sunk low, and drunkenness told its tale in his face. The next day, when I had provided him with linen and money, we travelled to Cicola, on the Lago D'Iseo, where Hugentobler had set up an agricultural school. He was good-natured enough to give him a post, with the assurance, however, that his first lapse would be followed by instant dismissal.

It was the old story; Zernecké was dismissed, gained admission into a hospital in Milan, where he died of inflammation of the lungs, the result of delirium tremens.

The end of this man, whom I had once admired, affected me deeply. I wrote a tribute to his memory, as the masterly translator of Leopardi's poems. Fate had hurled into the abyss an apostle of freedom because he could not master himself.

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I had fled from the Italian summer heat, which had stretched me upon a bed of sickness, so that I was at death's door with brain-fever. Now I was among the Dolomites, where, at Cortina, I found a glorious head-quarters. Nowhere had nature so impressed me as here, where I listened for her secrets day by day. A new world rose for me; and I felt strength and longing to inspire humanity with what I felt for nature. In a newspaper I described the wonders of this spot of earth, and my work found an echo in the lovers of nature there. This was especially the case with a cripple, who had lain on an invalid couch since his childhood, and could

hardly move. Day after day he was brought out to the front of the house, and day by day he saw before him the mystery of the mountains and of the starry heavens. Nature had made a philosopher of him. "I wanted to know," he said, "how every thing came to be as it is, therefore, I learnt to read and studied books. Now I read German and Italian and a little French." The man interested me deeply, I spent many hours with him. His eyes shone when I went to him. I provided him with books, and once lent him a free-thinking publication. "I have come to such thoughts myself," he said, looking around him. "Our people's eyes are bandaged; it is a good thing that strangers come and bring money into the valley. But the clergy do not like that; they want it for themselves." In the midst of my enjoyment of nature I worked daily as a schoolmaster and educator. Wladimir and Nikolas, my Russian pupils, had followed me to the mountains, and we continued our studies. I did all I could to reveal nature to them. The young people were enchanted with the new life, especially because I kept the training of the body in view, and took them on mountain expeditions, training myself at the same time. My work had never before been so fruitful; indeed, when I thought of the schoolmastering which I had hitherto carried on by aid of books, a cold shudder ran through me. How differently I laboured upon the soil of nature.

Of the many travellers who filled the hotels of Cortina, the majority came to the Alpine region without any deep feeling for nature. The well-beloved "number one" was the centre of every-

thing, and, before all, it had to eat and drink. They seemed so happy, so pleased with themselves—why should they trouble themselves with the problems of a new era of humanity! I seldom met with any one who had a free word to speak. Among the few I note a grey-bearded German-American.

“My dear doctor,” he said, “bring your ideas to us; devote your energy to young America!”

“I once spoke about this,” said I, “to the astronomer, Peters, when he called upon me in Venice; but he said that it was all a matter of chance.”

“Nonsense!” he cried. “There is room with us for men such as you! Do you imagine that you will have any success here? Heavens! who can devote himself for free education here? On the contrary, they will send you to the rightabout if you make the attempt. To found a school, such as you wish for, would be possible only in Switzerland; and for that you want a great deal of money; and, besides, special teaching powers. And you would not succeed in the university career either,” he continued. “You are not suited for it, and at last you would have to take the Geheimrath’s ugliest daughter into the bargain.” He laughed until he shook all over.

“Yes, I should be content if I could be free. But we have no chairs for the theory of teaching.”

“You are in a wrong position. With us you could have money and honour. No, you cannot go on longer with things as they are; even idealism may turn to nonsense. Come to New York.”

“I do not speak English enough.”

“ You will learn it.”

“ But I have no money to begin again with.”

“ That is not necessary. You will stay in my house until you have learnt English. It will only be a question of months in order to make a beginning.”

The generosity of the old man aroused my admiration, but I was not able to come to a decision. The struggle was by no means inviting ; and, besides, I was entertaining the thought of finding work to my taste at the free education school of Friedrich Beust, in Zürich, of which I had heard. At last my patron took leave, without my having made up my mind to accompany him. Some weeks afterwards I received a post-card to this effect : “ I leave Bremen on the 20th ; come with me ! ” But I remained in the Tyrol, and went afterwards to Zürich. It was during those days, when I was trying to find out a grotto with my young Russians, that I saw two ladies sitting upon a bank of moss. The younger one was more beautiful, but out of the full large eyes of the other there spoke a soul, which seemed to know nothing but truth and pure feeling.

“ Sir, do you know the way to the grotto ? ” asked the younger of the two sisters, in broken German.

“ We, too, are looking for it,” I replied, “ it must be somewhere in this direction.”

I would rather have asked them to join us. It was not fancy, the elder of the two affected me as no girl had done since my youthful days. At last my lads and I found the grotto, and climbed among the fantastic shapes, which nature had formed, and so into the open air. What a surprise ! The English

ladies are again there, having lost their way. In my delight I offer myself as guide, and we turn back. On leaving the cave, when I was about to introduce myself, all was changed. Frau von Wolkoff had come to meet us, and nothing remained but to take leave and return home. "You are unlucky," I said to myself; "Fortune has slipped through your fingers." But in a few days I met them in the hotel in which we had all been staying for weeks—yes, even on the same corridor, without having seen each other. Now came delightful days. Nature and music brought us together. In Miss Martha Osborn I found what I had felt at the moment of meeting—a wonderful combination of womanly and of manly spirit; a nature which strove towards the heights of life; full of love for nature and art; penetrated with a love of truth such as I had never yet found; a being who surpassed thousands of her kind. I loved and admired her.

"The Germans are atheists," she said once, when we were approaching a mountain tarn. I was strangely moved; I knew that she was an honest believer and hated all dissimulation.

"That is not correct," I said. "It is true that there are many who have their own belief. We are, you see, the nation of philosophers."

"Are you an atheist?" she inquired.

I felt myself on the brink of an abyss. Was my view of the world to be the cause of my losing her? I wished to answer the question in the affirmative, but my heart was heavy, and I tried to veil the truth. "I do not wish to be so," I answered, "but cannot believe everything."

I saw a shadow on her face, and was seized by a painful emotion. "You mean to be a free spirit," I said to myself, "and now, on the borders of a new life, can you be unfaithful?" I felt a thorn in my heart, but I had not the courage to tear it out. "You will reveal yourself at the next opportunity," thought I. But I did not do so; neither among the forest flowers, nor upon the heights, nor by the bare scree where one feels oneself an atom.

So the time passed, and I had to return to Venice to put my affairs in order before going to Zürich. My betrothed accompanied me. I had no idea that a knavish trick was being prepared for me in the town. Scarcely returned she found herself in the toils of worthless calumniators, who stained my honour.

When I heard of it I went to a lawyer. "Let the fellows alone," he said, "You are going to Switzerland, and your calumniators are in Austria. It would be a long, expensive business." The advice did not please me, but circumstances forced me to explain the matter to my *fiancée*, at Lugano. I could give her my word that the whole was false.

When I came to Zürich and related the affair to a friend, he was full of admiration for my future wife. "You meet a girl in a strange land, who has heard nothing of you and does not know you," he said, "and now she believes you, in spite of calumny, on the strength of your word, and is willing to share your lot, even with the danger before her of your ship going down. There is enough reason to congratulate you."

Soon calmer days came. I gave myself up to the study of the school system of Zürich, especially in Friedrich Beust's educational establishment in Hottingen. Friedrich Beust had been labouring, for almost a generation, as a disciple of Pestalozzi and Froebel, whose ideas he had developed. The spirit which characterised his work was that of his own past life. In stormy days he quitted a military career to labour for human improvement, on a liberal foundation. From a servant of the war-god he became an apostle of freedom. It was the first time that I had met an absolutely independent schoolmaster and promoter of education. I saw realised much that I had myself attempted; nothing delighted me more than the application of the principle of work to teaching in classes which I had myself attempted with single pupils only. It did me good to see that a whole school was devoted to the self-educating life of labour. In particular, Beust's institution fascinated me by its arithmetical instruction, and by the relief-models as aid to geographical and artistic training.

And this man was as good as unknown. Mr. So-and-so who had written books about others, and had published a schoolbook—one read of *him*; people spoke of *him*; and yet no one seemed to me so fitted as Friedrich Beust to reform the elementary school. When I saw how those, who make the history of pedagogy, honoured this man, I determined to take up his cause, which was at the same time mine, because it must lead to the realising of a liberal education. Beust's school decided me; I made up my mind to let drop all traditions, and to pursue the



problems of the natural education of man ; indeed, I often felt as though I must find a way of setting pedagogy upon a new foundation.

Still, I could not hope to maintain myself and to carry out my own ideas in Zürich. I was soon obliged to give up the idea of joining Beust, because I felt it would be impossible to influence his institution altogether after my own mind, and I did not venture to set up an educational establishment of my own ; the capital was lacking. I said to myself, better nothing than a half-and-half affair, and the perfect one would cost too much for me.

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So my path led me (in turn) to England, Baden-Baden, and Florence. Everywhere I had the same experience : without the help of the clergy, thrown upon my own resources, no opportunity offered, except in Florence, for the establishing of a liberal educational institution. Even at Florence, where, through the help of an enlightened Russian princess, it would have been possible for me to make a beginning, it became clear that the number of free-minded parents was extremely small, and the power of the Church crushing. It was a further hindrance that my purpose was to set up—not a gymnasium (or word-school), but a *Real-schule* (a school of things), and withal with an entirely original study-plan ; so that after laborious endeavours I found myself compelled to give up my intentions. I set before me another aim ; namely, to arrive at the basis of a

new system of education by separate instruction of individuals.

At that time, while I was struggling without success to realise my ideas, but had not, as yet, firm ground under me, the thought came, inspired by my wife, to write a book for mothers. It may appear strange that a wife of orthodox religious views should put herself at the service of a husband who wishes to devote himself to the free education of man. But exchange of thought, combined with an ideal striving, devotion of thought and deed to an ideal purpose common to both, made it possible for her to unite with me, and to second me without giving up her own convictions. Those were lovely hours when we set to work to fix the outlines of the book. Thus arose the "Letters to a Mother," which found a brilliant reception from the critics. In spite of that, its (pecuniary) success was small, partly because I had given the book into the hands of an unknown publishing agency, which got it up in bad taste; and partly on account of the chapter on religious education, which I had treated as delicately as I could. For all that, it was enough to cause an Augsburg newspaper to warn people against the book. The hopes which I had centred in it vanished one by one, and when a firm offered to publish the "Letters to a Mother" in a better form, and as a second edition of 10,000 copies, I jumped at the proposal, without any legal agreement. I believed the man, and thought deception impossible. At present I see that the first edition cost me 600 marks (£30), and that I have not yet received a penny from the second. But further, the publisher

declared that the copyright was his! So I was more unfortunate with the "Letters to a Mother" than with the "Recollections of my Youth," and yet I learnt nothing by experience!

In spite of all this, my optimism was as strong as ever; indeed, it had become as strong as that of my friend Hugentobler, whom I suddenly met again. The Jesuits had ruined him, so that he had to give up all educational projects, and was about to publish a newspaper. It succeeded for a time, and then everything collapsed. He left wife and nine children in Naples in order to make his way in England; and in fact he succeeded in maintaining his family. He wrote me once that he had an income of £400; but I have never heard how he got on as an apostle of freedom. I fear England was too hot for him, and that he had to retire to the States.

I myself was undecided what to do, but on one thing I was resolved; under no conditions to become a mere day labourer. I wished to live independently, and to labour in accordance with my own ideas. But what must I do in order to attain this object?

Once I thought I was near it. I was again enjoying the mountain air of the Tyrol when I met the director of a German private school, who was looking out for an experienced schoolmaster. I spoke to him of my plans. "My school is after your own heart," he said. "We have but few pupils; and you would be in a position to realise your ideas, at least, in part; stay here, and let us work together!" The fascination of the Meran country, and the fact that the school

had nothing to do with the Church or with the State, decided me to enter upon an engagement for two years. So I remained in the Tyrol, and if I did not find in the new sphere of activity all that I had hoped for, I gathered in new experiences. Although the school had but few pupils, and in a certain sense admitted individual teaching of a sort, I could not feel myself free.

An educational establishment, which depends upon the goodwill of certain people, is half-way between tradition and freedom. I saw this in society, as well as in my literary activity; I had to consider not myself only but the director and his livelihood. This consideration went so far that at first I went to church, and was obliged to put constraint upon myself in the press. I found myself obliged to leave much unsaid in my article, "Home and Foreign Educational Life and Educational System," and in a lecture on "Nature as Educator" I could only touch upon the question of education; and in school I was obliged to avoid everything that bordered on religious questions. Besides, I could not act for myself, even in the individual instruction; for I had always to bring the pupil forward as quickly as possible for the examination. I saw that I could not be happy unless I could have the work done entirely after my own ideas. "Give it up," said my wife; "let us try everything to be independent. It must succeed, I will fight with you." And we did succeed. I gave up all schoolwork and worked as an independent teacher. I did not hearken to the siren voices that said: "Now you are free; start an educational establishment after your own pattern,

and we will all help you." No, I made my compliments to them all—who wanted to benefit themselves. I became my true self, in order to keep my own independence in the service of truth.

I attained to having a pedagogical "children's hospital," inspected neither by the community nor by State officials; that is, I carried out individual teaching, in so far as I enjoyed the confidence of the parents and enriched my own experience. I did not advertise, but waited to be sought out, and accepted enough to make me independent as a teacher. If I thought I could be useful in print I worked through the press, and that often where help was most needed, in small, dependent papers, which suffer for want of good co-workers. This meant making sacrifices, but fortune had given me a wife, who was able and willing to bear privations and to devote her powers to a service which love alone makes possible; who gave me an ideal home-life, and was of essential influence in my efforts and action. I recognised that the best help for a fighter for freedom is a woman's spirit, and the happiest marriage is a marriage of souls.

So the time came when, at last, I was quite free. I was really my own master; yes, a kingdom seemed nothing compared to my lot, even though I had continually to fight for it. One comes to oneself in freedom only; and no teacher can do great things while he is hampered by the control of others. The freer one is the more one's eyes are opened. So at last I gained the certainty that the whole of (existing) education is on a false basis. Experience took me along paths which place education purely on the

basis of *nature*. On this basis I reaped results; on this ground I found that youth works, is happy, and ripens natural fruits. When at last I undertook to form the sum of my experiences into the framework of a system, and joined in one all the threads which I had spun from the practice of individual instruction, I felt enraptured. *I saw the way of all development to be the natural way of human development*—that is, not a theory drawn from speculative ethics and psychology; but from an ethical theory as *natural theory*, and from soul theory as *nature theory*; so that education itself becomes *nature theory*—that is, becomes *development of man in accordance with the laws of nature*. It was not the fact that I had founded a system that overcame me, but the fact that this system was nothing more than the expression of labour tried and proved by myself. The thought of having carried over the unity of nature into education, and created a system which throws speculation overboard and makes of pedagogy an inductive science, makes of it science of experiment and of nature—this thought moved me to tears. And when I dreaded that the theorists, the abstract arm-chair scholars, would say that it was all a growth of my imagination, then the truth comforted me that the objective system makes into an organic whole the fragmentary facts which I had been proving—over and over again—through a period of ten years, to be true, logical, and natural. This fact made me hold fast the conviction that the hour *must* come in which natural teaching shall be seriously considered. In my delight I wrote to Dr. Dittes as much as I was then able to communicate; and when he

answered that I must take time, I came to the resolution to carry out the matter without a moment's delay. So I wrote, as fast as pen could move, from morning till night, month by month ; I could scarcely await the time for bringing the work into the market. But the series of disillusion soon began. Cotta's publishing house, in which Pestalozzi's work had appeared, strained my patience to the uttermost. At last, after more than fifteen weeks, the manuscript was returned to me with the remark that Cotta had not found leisure to read it. I was out of patience, for the favourable time for publication was gone by. So I turned to Julius Klinkhardt's publishing house ; but how astonished I was to hear that he would not take the book except on condition that I was responsible for the risk. This answer of a publisher, who may earn millions through school and teachers, was crushing. So I determined to make a last sacrifice for the cause, and to publish the work on the spot at my own cost. It was a great mistake, but the book was now, at all events, in the market. The beginning, it is true, was the continuation of what I had experienced before—disappointment. I was mistaken in no one so much as in Dr. Dittes. He, who had written and spoken so much about freedom, had now only a few lines to spare for the system of liberal education in a set of literary notices ; indeed, he connected it with a pamphlet already noticed, "Moses or Darwin," so that the reader could not help thinking that my work contained like matter with Dodel's. I, who had leaned on Dittes, as on a rock, and thought that he would thank me warmly for setting forth a system which, at last, made a way

for freedom, was now to learn that my "friend" had not even the courage to fight the question. Now I knew where I was, and what "natural education" has to expect from liberalism. The consequences were not wanting; many papers did even more than follow their leader; like true parasites they did not even print a notice of the book, so as not to forfeit the favour of certain scholastic dignitaries.

But more. In my joy I had sent my work with a letter to some celebrated men, who had worked for the cause of freedom, and I experienced what I should have thought impossible; they did not even acknowledge its receipt. And many periodicals, even such as I had worked for gratis, said nothing; and many which had promised to take up the cause said not a word more.

And in spite of that things turned out differently. Learned men and authors showed their approbation, even the aged Herbert Spencer wrote a warm letter of approval. But more to me were the discussions which the work occasioned, in various educational and other papers; and the many letters, which reached me, even from other countries, and still reach me. Not rarely I read how teachers in the elementary schools had worked in the same spirit, and triumphed with me. More than aught else, the appreciation of teachers, who themselves are trying to solve the problems of humane education, is a recompense for my endeavours. My judges are not the professors of pedagogy, but the elementary teachers, who daily feed the child-soul, and are striving for an independent education, independent schools, and a free body of teachers. By my work,



"Natural Education," I lost some so-called friends, but I do not miss them. I have found others who do not fear to lose their good name. Dozens have disappeared through cowardice, as through envy, and even those who count for self-sacrificing did not give a stroke of the pen for the cause, because a contemptible selfishness leads them to follow secret paths towards freedom, which may bring them tempting morsels or a little passing renown. They roar like lions, but, if one looks more closely, there is not a spark of strength in them; it is this species of liberals who harm the cause a thousand times more than they serve it, let them be scholars, authors, or schoolmasters. The pitiableness of their action is evident at every turn, they are the liberal hypocrites and the hypocritical liberals, who flourish the banner of freedom, and when there is a question of action are not to be found. Nothing opened my eyes more than the reception of "Natural Education," as to who are the true, and who the false friends of the cause for which our noblest spirits fought and suffered. I found friends in unexpected quarters, and the greatest enthusiasm on the part of those who are, as it were, nameless, while the school-dignitaries said: "Verily, I know him not!" But I saw also, how need keeps down the German teachers, so that they are obliged to give their pence for bread in order just to live.

My work, "Natural Education," was, moreover, interesting, because I still myself lay (partly) in the fetters of psychology, which does not get beyond religious education. That is not to be wondered at, so long as psychology is not treated as what it really

is, a natural science. As long as one tries to interpret human nature by that which a "civilised" man—that is, one maimed by culture—is, so long will education be alloyed by the interests of Church and State. One must not be too much amazed at this; for the defenders of psychology are not naturalists but arm-chair theorists, who, already *ex officio*, reject the objective point of view; that is, have regard to it only so far as it does not endanger their interests. Besides, an academic teacher requires hearers, who, in their turn, devote themselves to State or Church, and so the course of the theory, which he calls science, is prearranged; it is the familiar circuit, all of whose points go through all the spheres of the Church and State interests. Natural education cannot be founded on the basis of personal interests, or politics, or religion, but on that basis which is common to humanity and to all nature, that is, the objective which all development follows; and by this means psychology takes not the first but the second place, by which the skeleton is clothed with flesh and blood. Natural education, subordinating itself to the laws of nature, corresponds to experience as well as to reason, and frees teacher and pupil from the fetters of tradition, according to which man is to be educated not for his own sake but for that of others. *The future can belong to that education only which in everything coincides with nature.*

Too true. The times must change before natural education can be thoroughly taken in hand; but the day *will* come. It is the duty of all thinking people to do their part, so that society may be

thoroughly transformed. The future, the happiness of the individual as well as that of nations, rests in the first place with education, compared with which all the rest falls into the background. The endeavour to be free has always some result. Even I came nearer to my goal. When I had freed myself and found inward peace, the contradictions in married life caused by the Church were cleared away. Where there are religious differences, and that is the case in most marriages, no one is spared the struggle, which is greater the stronger the bond which unites husband and wife. A rough man wounds, as does everything rough; but a cultivated man has a conciliating influence and is a leaven. There came a time for us two when pain was overcome by a mutual toleration, grounded in moral esteem, such as allows each side its own individuality. In other words, we understood each other better and amalgamated more and more. Now I needed no longer to be silent before the world, nor to dissemble, when I felt myself bound to speak. On the contrary, I felt the inward comforting satisfaction of showing myself as I was, what I thought, what I desired, and was striving for.

Nothing could have been more welcome, therefore, than the opportunity which was given me of writing an illustrated natural history — “the first step,” thought I, “the beginning in the spirit of natural education.” I began the work with pleasure, although obliged to keep its tone mild because it was intended for school-children. Actually, my two volumes, “*Illustrated Natural History of the three Kingdoms*,” being the first conceived on the ground of a natural

view of the world, had so favourable a reception that in little more than a year 1800 copies were sold. While I was planning an improved edition, I suffered another disappointment. I had again reckoned without my host ; that is, again without a formal agreement. I learned indeed that the work had been printed in 5000 copies, and I was to have no rights in my own work ! To the pecuniary disappointments, in the matter of publishing the book, were added not less trying ones in connection with many periodicals and professional papers, for which I worked, as well as with the practical work of individual instruction. With the exception of a few liberal papers, which pay the literary man a respectable fee, my work was paid either shabbily or not at all ; indeed, sometimes I had to ask for a copy of my unpaid contribution, in order to possess it in print. Many articles I never got back again ; *e.g.*, "Sketches of Nature and Character," which I sent to a newspaper in Mülhausen, which did not honour me with a reply. I had like experiences with many a newspaper, as soon as the question of payment came to the fore ; *e.g.*, I learnt what free intellectual workers have to undergo. One publisher, who lives during the summer in his villa on the Lake of Lucerne, paid for a pretty long contribution three marks ; and another, who had made a fortune out of the school, paid me half the sum agreed to, and only made it up under pressure of a lawyer's letter. The educational papers, for which I worked indefatigably, were often in no condition to pay at all ; indeed, many of them are only able to keep their heads above water by the enthusiasm of the

teachers. For a closely-printed page in a periodical, whose publishers had earned a million through school and schools, I was paid with a florin, and the payment was put to my credit—for the subscription! A monthly publication of repute paid twenty marks for a sheet of print, the work of many days, and that only because (the publisher wrote) of my having been a co-worker for many years. A treatise which appeared in February was paid for the next Christmas. And so one vexation followed another. I may safely assert, that half of what was my due remained unpaid. If I were to disclose how people did not think it necessary to pay me for instruction which, in many cases, influenced their whole lives, I could write a pamphlet which would prove how work in the service of freedom is rewarded. Those only know who themselves serve the cause. "It is your own fault, you let yourself be made a prey of," said an author well-versed in his business. "If you continue to put the cause before the money, they will not pay you at all." The man was right; requests for co-operation came from all sides, but no money; instead of that, one year I paid more in postage than I got in fees! Once—it was a family festival—I was called before the magistrate. The district judge thought I was accused of profanation of religion. "The affair does not originate with us," he said, "but at Vienna, where an article appeared in the 'Universal Austrian Teachers' Paper,' entitled: 'Our Education for Truth.' Are you the author?"

I said "Yes," without understanding what they wanted with me. The article had appeared in

Dr. Specht's "Humanity" at Gotha, and had been published without objection. When the before-mentioned paper in Vienna asked me for a contribution, I wrote that I had no time, but would send some printed matter which I left to the editors to use or not. So the article came into the Vienna Teachers' paper, and became the prey of the obscurantists. A member of Parliament took up the matter and went to the Minister of Public Instruction, who referred him to the Minister of Justice, by whom he was sent to the State Advocate. I was obliged to go to Vienna, where Conrad Ettel, personally a stranger, stood by me, and made it possible for me to have counsel, in the person of Dr. Pergelt, member of the Imperial Parliament. The affair which, by the way, was discussed in the Vienna journals, ended in my unanimous acquittal; and the editor also was acquitted. The trial offered a strange picture, as I was treated from the first as guilty, so that at last I relinquished my defence. And what had the men of darkness achieved? Well-deserved rebuff from the sound common sense of the jury, who belonged without exception to the labour and business classes; I might say "fortunately," for I am convinced that officials and scholars would have thrown me over. So the State had to pay the costs, and though my candour cost me several hundred florins and much time, yet I went forth free, henceforth to uphold the truth more zealously than ever, so that I am an outlaw in the land of pious customs. The Church keeps, as is well known, a black list of liberal-minded teachers and friends of culture. As an independent man I cannot be crushed, nor

hounded out of my position. . None the less, the Protestant obscurantists succeeded in ruining the second accused, Ellermann, teacher and editor. After the trial the undermining work went on ; they deprived him of his office. But his work in the service of freedom brought him good fortune ; the fallen was raised. An appointment was offered him as engineer in the first electric company of Vienna, and there he need not long for the fleshpots of clericalism, which, like the vulture with its prey, prefers its victims, the teachers, fettered. Specially indebted as I was to Ettel for his help, I owed thanks also to a number of other men, among whom I mention Professor Büchner, Baron von Carneri, and Professor Frohschammer, who came to my aid with intellectual weapons. But their kindness was vain. The court permitted neither my writings nor those of others. From one to six months imprisonment for the proof that our (professed) education for truth is an illusion would have been rather much, even when one feels oneself in the furthestmost corner of the heavenly kingdom. I need scarcely say how the result of the trial piqued the clerical party, and how I was looked upon by many a pious dignitary. With that exception everything remained unaltered, and I stayed in the Tyrol. I was, indeed, invited to settle in Vienna, Zürich, Berlin ; but warned by others against exchanging the quiet of nature for the exhausting life of a great city, I declined. "Stay among the mountains," wrote a friend ; "you will preserve your strength and thank me for my advice."

And yet I felt a hundred times over the want of

personal intercourse with men and women whose hands I should have liked to grasp. I know, too, how precious is oral exchange of thought, and how good for the cause. All the greater therefore was my joy when I found it possible to attend the German Freethinkers' Congress. The days did me good. I felt myself in the movement; my impressions were deep, although I should have wished to see there as many schoolmasters as working men. The more freely I acted the narrower was my sphere of work. If I turned to families, I found on the one hand indifference, yes, absolute want of understanding for the education question, and, besides, an inconceivable dread of acting upon what they accepted as true. If I turned to the subject of children's books, I saw the same thing. Now a publisher must be a business man, first; I did not succeed in meeting with one who had likewise a heart. I found the same thing among the professional teachers, who can, at most, allow free aims to peep out only here and there for fear of being branded as revolutionaries by the reactionary pack. And what can one expect of teachers when even the theorists' have no understanding for free education, and leave unsupported efforts which are made to put an end to mechanical teaching for fear of society and loss of position? Then the daily papers and the family periodicals? These are, first of all, sources of income for Christian or Jewish publishers and joint-stock companies, who have to meet the taste of the masses, and would rather lose a hundred contributors than one subscriber. And the liberal representatives of the people? Alas! most of them



have lost the breath of popular life ; and all lack the courage to go beyond the narrow limits of a so-called liberalism. All this, and much beside, made my sphere of activity narrower, but not less effective. On the contrary, I found many allies, each of whom is a fighter, and strengthens my faith in the victory of the cause. Just in our days, when the power of free thought is increasing by reason of the movement, a beginning has been made. The movement is admirable ; there is no doubt that it will be of the very greatest importance to education, school, and the teaching profession. Not the State officials and the priests, but the true working class will clear away the unnatural education, and the servitude of the teachers. One may not agree with their final aims, but at any rate a tangible beginning has been made, even in districts which still count as strongholds of popular stupidity. Day is dawning ; the pillars of dogma and prejudice totter ; the spirit of nature rises ; day is breaking. And how could it be otherwise ?

Man is born like the animal, without religion and without creed. Children have no need of Church dogmas, nor of being conformed to a settled religion or creed. Everything beautiful, good, and true seems to them divine, and whoever reveals this kingdom to them reveals God. By nature, man is an unwritten page, as wax which can be moulded, and upon which one can write what one will. So long as we are children, we believe what is taught us, and do what others do. But it does not remain so, for the nature of man is like all nature—*it develops freedom*. This original nature can be 'choked, but

never killed ; it is like the seed, which is blown hither and thither by the winds and which cannot spring up on the rock ; but if a happy event carries it to fertile ground, then the dried-up form unfolds and bids defiance to wind and weather.

It was so with me, and it is so with all independent minds ; their primitive nature seeks for and finds soil, air, and sunshine. Where the spirit is dulled and blinded there force has play, there the man believes, there he trembles in dread of the beyond ; he kisses the hem of the priest's garment, who promises him everything if he believes, if he suppresses his reason. But where the mind is sharper than the sword of faith, then a cleft becomes visible, and thought breaks through the husks of artificial belief. If the dogmas of religious belief and of society with their strongholds were natural, they would be engraved more and more deeply the older one grew ; even a youth would let his thoughts and feelings grow up in them. Instead of that, he sighs for the gateway of freedom and becomes a doubter ; and the more freely he is able to develop, the more quickly he rids himself of the illusions, one of which leads to the other, like the nurse's fairy-tales which are to lull the child to sleep. Man is a being who is happy only in the air of liberty, in the search for truth, in the adjusting of injustice. I began to feel myself a man, only when I broke through the net of religious and social bondage, and the greater was my inward calm, the stronger grew my impulse to throw off educational dogmas, too ; that heap of absurdities which the school has raised for the profit of those in power, and has sanctified into a new gospel.

All our happiness presupposes that we are consistent with ourselves, and since man cannot help thinking, and the thinker comes into contradiction with every worship of dogma, he can become happy only by abolishing dogma. Of one who asserts that school education with its nonsense has brought him happiness, one may quietly say that he is still in a childish stage of development. He may lay claim to much merit, but he is no thinker, no leavener of the future. Either one does not think, but worships men, and is afraid of them; or one thinks, and becomes a pioneer of the new time, the new faith, the new society. Now, because to think is natural, to put up with what exists is unnatural. Who, if one thinks at all, can feel himself happy in the fog into which humanity has fallen. His own life, in proportion to his own humanity, freedom, and ideality, must teach him that the better time can only come, when all tying-down, and maiming of the human soul, is abolished and men can think *freely* and act *freely*. And since free thought in morals leads to moral conduct, whereof the roots are in *education*, we need a *new* education, a *new* school, in which *natural* idealism is embodied, and compared to which artificial education is as night to day. *To be an independent teacher means to serve natural idealism, one's own emancipation, and that of mankind in school and in life.*

Is it said this idealism does not bring happiness? It brings happiness to one's own breast, so that thought and action coincide, and the independent teacher passes it on to the young, as also to society, which ought to live in *one* spirit and in *one* love on

the basis of freedom, justice, and truth. It brings happiness; for it makes of men and nations brethren, and places our decaying civilisation—which now grows numb in its armour, which bleeds to death under wars and churches, which deprives poverty of the right of free self-direction—upon a human basis, which will become more beautiful the higher one lifts the torch of freedom and humanity. To this idealism, to a faith in the humanising of man, through education on the basis of popular life, I have striven and attained. The conflict was a natural one, and therefore I feel my “ego” to be the natural fruit of an earnest life, and could not, and would not, resign it for a kingdom. To-day I can look back as an honest man, who did not work to gain place or title, money or renown, but followed his inner impulse and was faithful to his best self. I have listened to no one, and have followed no one but myself, and so I am become what every one is who remains faithful to himself, a natural man. And because, too, I have conquered myself, I do not feel desponding, but full of courage to-day, when the storm which I have braved is behind me. I hear more distinctly than ever a stir in the air, the whisper of spring; or does it not perhaps sound the clearest out of the night of servitude which overshadows our time? I know how dark is our night, how poor in those things which poets have sung, how enslaved by lies, extortion, and vulgarity. If the sore smarts most among the working classes, it is not much better among the teachers; indeed, one often does not know where it could be more painful, this self-interested, mind-darkening

oppression which lays low the most lovely blossoms. I have experienced it myself ; my life bears the marks of the struggle of freedom and light with oppression, stupefaction, and degradation, through a society which is upside down, which understands nothing but coercion and slavery, and therefore must be reconstructed from its root upwards.

The elementary teacher is brought up poor in body and mind ; he is left poor in money and happiness ; hunger and need fight in his ranks ; he must truckle to the priests of creed and capital, and if he ever fancies himself free, and is happy and cheerful, then comes a wave of reaction and drags him with all his hopes into the depths. He is chained, chained to the rock of powers that be, and finds himself left to chance like a leaf upon the restless ocean. He has nothing to hope for from princes of the church or of wealth ; nothing from the *noblesse*, who put him on a level with their grooms ; nothing from the liberals, who delude him with false hopes. He who, above all, deserves the best culture and the highest estimation, because the humanising of mankind depends upon education, belongs to the lowest of the intellectual castes, whose way he has to smooth. He who strains every nerve to ennoble himself and the world around him is at a loss how to proceed. If he aims at raising his own position, the fists of the privileged classes hold him down ; if he desires a press with free exchange of opinion, he finds himself before the magistrate ; if he wants to go in for politics, like anybody else, he receives the necessary rebuke ; if he asks for liberal education, he is held as in a vice by the parsons and their

myrmidons, who, *ex officio*, dress him up in their wretched school-rags; and if he demands, at least, bread for his children, they laugh in his face or fling him mouldy crusts. "What, no money?" he asks to-day as he did yesterday. Of course, militarism swallows up the money, and what remains over falls into the lap of the capitalists, the *noblesse*, and the clerical rulers of the divine system of the world. The teacher—what is a teacher? He may wish for what he likes, he has no business to wish for anything, he is only one of the pieces with which the game is played.

But is the culture of man really nothing? Can one not see with one's own eyes that no law, no weapon, no capital, no prayer, is more precious than the development of the human being! The child which the mother bore; the youth—blossoms on the human tree—are they not worth the greatest sacrifices, and should it not be glorious to labour as co-founder of the new society? No one who has struggled and suffered for this goal; no one who has brought up children and moulded into beauty the nature of the human being as a sculptor transforms his marble—we do not despair of victory at last. *The billows of reaction and oppression may swallow up millions; but the mind they can never sink in their muddy depths, for the supreme law of nature is development!* Nature overthrows all human cunning; nature allows time for the spirit to unfold its pinions; *and with the natural mind natural society will blossom*; and it will come to be known whether dogmas and castes, war and plunder,

have made the world better and happier than *education* in the service of *humanity*.

Never more than in these very days have I heard the wonderful whisper, *the whisper of spring, which comes from the realm of freedom*.

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Yet the world of reality, and that in our own bosoms, are a long way apart; the chains still rattle. Man is to be a prisoner, and but slowly work his way through the forest of darkness to the standpoint of freedom. Have I myself thrown off the chains? Can I say that I have become an independent teacher?

I do say so. I feel myself my own liege lord. I know only *one* authority and *one* belief, and therefore I bow not before those who are in authority; nor am I full of grief, who formerly rested not for questionings about God and man. I can, to-day, look quietly around me and into the great future; I no longer grope through the night of trembling without knowing what I ought to do, and what I want; no, I know what I want, and I want what I know.

"Then reveal thyself!" I hear voices cry, "that we may know what thou wilt and what thou art!"

So be it! I know ye looked into my outer life, but not far into my heart. If I succeed, you shall see my innermost self and know what I will and what I am. But as I wish you, too, to feel, you must give your patience to a serious train of thought.

There was a time when men lived like the animals,

only they had one advantage over the beasts, as civilised man has over the cannibal, his brother. The child was born free, and remained a free link in the chain of nature. There were neither priests nor officials, books nor schools. And yet each one learnt what he needed; aye, many a one more than he would learn to-day.

How did that come to pass? The answer is simple—*life was natural*. Man lived *in* nature, and *by* nature; by her men, were forced into a conflict in which senses and limbs, bodily and spiritual life, were perfected. Hunger and thirst had to be satisfied, and men had to protect themselves from frost, cold and heat, rain, storm, and sickness. While yet a child man learnt to see and to hear, to observe and to think; indeed, he must see, hear, taste, smell, feel, and touch *well*—that is, the root of intellectual development was fostered along with that of the body, in conflict with nature; it was the conflict between being and not being. But man could, and must, conquer; he possessed the gift of imitation, of adapting himself to climate and other conditions; and each generation was lifted a little higher than its precursor by bodily and mental inheritance. Thereby development, the fundamental law of nature, was assured. In other words, *nature* was the school, and education was *natural*.

Those times lie in a grey mist; life has become different, priests and statesmen came and set up rules of education to suit their own aims; the *natural* relations gave way to *artificial* ones. That was a coercion; for once written, education became established in the service of the monasteries and churches, of



parties and rulers. The aim was no longer to subdue nature, but to enslave man ; and the better they learned how to trample under foot natural circumstances, the more artificial education became, the more did men's mental horizon darken. At last, indeed, the state of things brought about by coercion, was thought to be altogether the natural one ; *it seemed quite natural to educate a human being artificially.* The triumph of the mighty mounted up to Heaven ; they ensured to the refractory poverty and misery on earth, and after death—hell. Now one could make what one liked of the child, like the potter, who forms out of his lumps of clay solid or hollow, noble or ugly, vessels. *There was an end of natural right ;* man was educated by Church and priest, everything that he had devised and invented dreamt and believed, was made into a means of education, and this man was no longer developed by means of nature with her rights, truths, and beauties, but by dogmas and legends, doctrines of Church and State, war histories, religious histories, and so forth.

What had education become ? *A caricature, a burlesque party matter, a thing of private interests, and haphazard.* “Only make sure of the school !” thought priests and politicians, aristocrats and priests of Mammon, each in his own way ; healthy egoism had turned to exploitation. So the child was brought up, *here* in this way, *there* in that, according to birth and fortune, religion or sect, State and form of government. The natural bond was severed, quite in opposition to the nature of man ; for human nature is to-day as it was thousands of years ago, and the stars of heaven will shine to-morrow as they

shone when mother earth had not yet created man. Gone was the natural relation between man and nature, and that, too, between man and man, although it is written on our foreheads that we are all equal, children of the same light and of the same earth; although we have all the same rights and duties, needs and impulses, the noblest of which is that we *become truly human*. A fire burns in our breasts; we want to grow happier and better, and also to make our fellow men happier and better, too.

But can we educators do this? We, who have to suffer every kind of abuse from the Church, which says that men are beginning to grow worse through the school, which is the hotbed of unbelief; or how could the school possibly educate man according to his nature, when it has been degraded to a place of mechanical drill to serve the interests of the powers that be? It is self-evident that we cannot *turn back*. Retreat would be equivalent to mutilation, misery, death. It is a law of nature, progress only is possible. "Forward!" is the watchword of all who are, at least inwardly, free; who spiritually are not narrow, and morally are not corrupt. One thing is certain: before the school can work naturally, the way must be smoothed for her; *she must be independent as nature itself is*.

To-day she is everybody's slave. Where school and teachers starve; where they depend upon the purses of individual patrons and parties, and have to beg to-day here, to-morrow there; where they are still fighting for the right to exist, then the whole is a poor-house, with everything pertaining thereto.

Because the school is dependent upon party, and is always without money, it is a makeshift institution, for everything costs money, if it is to be as it should; natural education, indeed, costs *much* money. But is it too much for the young, for the future to raise, perhaps the half of what is swallowed up by militarism, to which we sacrifice yearly thousands of lives on the field of blood and iron? France puts 625 millions of francs on her war-budget, not to be behind Germany; and the Russian hundred-million-empire has actually 7,000,000 roubles over for the education of her people. These figures tell that mankind has not yet attained to the consciousness of its humanity; but, in fact, is still in the stage of barbarism. The material poverty of school and teachers, already become proverbial, depends upon the fact of their being of no importance in the community and the State; they do not know whereto they belong. But to whom does the school belong? It has no position so long as it is not *politically* independent. The national school cannot belong to *any* party; it is the property of the people. So long as we do not free it from its uncertain position, from the fangs of the enemy, it is only in name a national school; in reality it is a field for speculation. What it has sown during the day the evil one rakes up during the night, and it would often be better to close it and to write upon the door the words: "This school will remain closed until it is independent." The school should be a garden for human beings; but a garden which gives entrance to all who may tear down and take away what they choose is an absurdity.

Until the school is materially and politically independent it can not be *spiritually* free. What does this mean, that it ought to be spiritually free? I answer, it ought to stand in the service of truth, beauty, and love. Therefore it must not work in the service of dogmas, legends, and national animosities, to feed the flame of religious and political quarrels, instead of love. Believers and unbelievers, all ought to live together under one roof, and by the same spring—that of light and of truth. They who wish to have their children educated—as Protestants, Catholics, Jews—may turn to the Church. The school must be free, true, and beautiful, like nature, the temple of freedom, truth, and beauty. In order to make the school independent materially, politically, and mentally, it must be a *social school*, independent of all parties, in which the natural relation of man to man is taken into account. Nothing ought to divide children of the same blood and the same earth; nothing ought to mark them off as different beings. All are, and count as, equals before the judgment-seat of conscience, like the flowers of the field under the arch of heaven. Can there be a higher aim than the primal one, the natural one, according to which we are all brothers and sisters, with equal rights and duties?

We need a school, which does not destroy, but *builds up*; does not divide, but *unites*; which leads not to religious or class-hatred, or any hatred of human-kind, but to *love, truth, and justice*. If the world is to improve we need a *new school*; the *true real school of the people*. We have a school, to be sure, but no *school of the people*; an education,

but no *popular education* ; a spirit, *but no people's spirit*.

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From the heart of the nation there comes a cry : " Give us education ! " But the cry does not reach the heights ; or the answer comes, cool and contemptuous : " The people needs no more than it has."

On the one side is the labouring class, on the other the educated Philistine, to whom the popular spirit is a national danger. And there things stick, and books are written about culture. One holds a person to be educated, whose powers are harmoniously developed ; and another says something different ; but no one says what culture is, because they bring the nation into opposition with the education of the people, and speak of an academic, a classical, a literary, a scientific, a musical, a " society " culture, &c., but never speak of true culture of the people. And why ? Because we have classes and castes, but no such question as, " In what condition is the education of our people ? "

I reply, it is with the people's education just as with the education of the so-called educated. *The coin is not genuine* ; but there is one difference : the people's coin is worth nothing, while that of the cultured is (by themselves) accepted at its face-value. First of all, *justice* is lacking, for physical and moral misery are the lot of the nations. Where hunger and poverty reign ; where the unborn child bears in it the seeds of disease ; where the father

fight for existence, and the mother knows not how to feed and clothe her child—*there* the tree of the popular education is already broken at the root; and *degeneration*, with its cripples, idiots, dolts, and criminals, scares away every dream of popular culture and popular spirit, all educational theories and ideas. Degeneration, the result of coercion, rises like a pillar of fire, and brings us to despair, when we try to work for human culture in the low grounds of the physically and morally disinherited. Where disease and hunger have their home, and the right to be educated is trampled under foot, *there* can be no popular culture.

Nor can it be where misery and crime are not present, for *there is no money*. In our days, ours—who have the privilege of beholding the millions earned by the people's labour sacrificed to militarism—the nation has nothing left over for the people's education. The armed peace of the so-called civilised States costs from three to eight times as much as their national education; Switzerland only is an exception. Nine-tenths of the population earns its bread by toil, and these very nine-tenths, who earn the millions for the State, have not the means of giving their children a decent education, whilst the *one-tenth*, which does not toil, enjoys the privilege of education. The young people of the rich can obtain unlimited education. To wealth it is given, and poverty is thrust from the door for begging. Millions are scarcely able to attend an elementary school, and the most talented ones are hindered from pursuing their triumphal course to the heights for which they are designed by nature; their path is lost in the

by-ways of life, whilst numberless blockheads are honoured as geniuses. Millions would attend theatres, concerts, museums; but have no chance. *Education is a privilege.*

There is, to be sure, one side of national education which is fixed by no one, which runs its course from generation to generation, and is everywhere at home; it is that which characterises heart and manners, and which expresses itself in outward ways. This side of national culture is, no doubt, determined by the nation itself, without consciousness as without constraint. But there is another side of national education—both conscious and compulsory—which is imposed upon the nation by the school. Who fixes this? Does the nation do it? No, a government department—that is, not something growing out of the nation's life, but a committee of lawyers with a representative of nobility and landed property at its head. National education, in the elementary schools, is fixed by men who, as neither belonging to the people nor chosen by the people, can well solve any question but *this*. How can one speak of *national education*, when the national school is not regulated by the people, when all decrees which reach the schoolroom from the green council-table of the ministry, are meant not to serve the people but the *noblesse*, the *parsons*, and the *millionaires*? Those are the powers that create the ministry, and make of national education a caricature; it is they of whom Grillparzer sings: "The heart of the rich warms more and more towards the poor; but, for all that, the poor man becomes poorer every day." As is the soil, so is the fruit! What we call a *national school*

is not the people's school, but a religious school for the children of poor people. "Everything that is distinguished by birth and wealth keeps aloof; and it seems a mockery that the people do not house their children under one roof; here the school is Catholic, there Protestant, Reformed, Jewish—that is, *anything you please, except human*. Any one who believes that the schools rest upon the basis which philanthropists and apostles of the people created, is utterly mistaken. Child and human being are not their chief concern, but State officials and representatives of the Church; not knowledge and truth, but belief; not faith in the humanising of man in this world, but purgatory and salvation in the other. Their foundation is not humanity, but party, politics, sect; they do not aim at the new era, but the old, and their methods are the old ones and not the new. They preach not the springtime of humanity, but a patriotism which is not fraternal; instead of opening the eyes, they blind them with a thousand fancy pictures. And when the child enters life, it finds that it knows nothing, and can do nothing; that it attended a *people's school* without understanding its own *people*. In a word, the *elementary school is that in which neither elementary teacher, nor science, nor the nation itself, has a word to say, for it exists not for the child, but the child for the school; it is not for the people, but for Church, capital, and squirearchy*.

In the same condition as the people's culture is the popular spirit; the average of a people's intellectual and moral achievements; the whole spiritual atmosphere in which they live. Where education is heavy



and suffocating, there the people are dull and torpid ; where education is pure and enlivening, there one finds prosperity and happiness. Just as we have no popular culture, so we have no popular spirit ; but we have the spirit of rank, of office, of caste, of birth, and mind privileges ; the spirit of incorporated learning and established belief ; of militarism and bureaucracy. Each of these has its own spirit, and each one fixes its stamp on the people who earn their bread in the sweat of their brow—the stigma of *servitude* and *stupidity*. A popular spirit which springs from the soil of force cannot be the natural one.

Our people as yet knows only one spirit, that of bondage, of trembling, and truckling. The feeling for freedom is dead ; dead the striving after knowledge and brotherhood.

The question “ *What is to be done ?* ” is a reform question, of world-wide significance, for it is equivalent to the new birth of humanity.

So long as a nation is a mixture of rank and castes, privileged people and slaves, popular culture is a Utopia ; true national education is only possible where there is a nation, an organic community, with equal rights and duties. On that very account official pedagogy will be only dust in the nation's eyes until the nation has attained to *social reform*, such as not only abolishes hunger and misery, but also the class-privilege of education. The popular idea is simply inconceivable, without culture of the people. The poor man's child would develop if it could, like the child of the millionaire. Not till it can be said the barrier is annihilated, not till in town and country equality before God shall have

grown into equality before men, can the people's sun shine for the people. Gratuitous elementary-school instruction is the first step towards popular education.

The second step is the *emancipation* of the *elementary school*. This emancipation depends, above all, on two things equally: first, on freeing the school from church-rule; and, second, on the formation of a *parliamentary body*, chosen by the people, on purpose to take in hand the question of national education. So long as the nation is not able to fix the nation's education, there will be neither a national school nor a national culture; and the sacrifices made by idealist teachers and friends of the people will be in vain. Not till the elementary school has become the people's own will it truly serve the people. Moreover, talents hidden in the lap of the people in agreement with their gifts and tastes must be brought out at the cost of the community, beyond the limits of the elementary school. The happiness of thousands would thereby be assured, and a striving after improvement would be awakened in the people. National culture without consideration of the people's talents *is* not national culture. The best powers are latent in the people; and to train the people's gifts means pouring new *blood* into the body corporate.

Not till a popular education shall have been created—gratuitous and popular, on the basis of modern knowledge—will the time be come when Science, Art, and Literature exist not for scholars, artists, and educated persons only, *but for the nation*. Where are the scholars who speak to the people?

Where the artists and authors who are "understood of" the people? Alas! most of these have withdrawn from (real) life, and take themselves to be the more valuable the less they concern themselves with it. As if Science, Art, and Literature had any meaning, unless they are a national possession. All learning, art, and literature, which are not good for *popular culture*, are good for nothing. What we need is scientific men, poets, and artists who understand the people and are understood by them; not till then will the people begin to take an interest in their own culture. Then we shall no longer go begging to the people, but the people will come to us, and will ask for science, art, and literature—a library, a theatre, a reading-room, a museum.

This *new* spirit will be the *popular spirit*, the spirit of solidarity, and of standing up for whatever is truly humanising. It will be the spirit, as simple as it is great, which sees in its fellow man neither a God, nor a beast which is made use of and killed, but flesh of one's *own* flesh, and spirit of one's *own* spirit. Else why should the human breast be filled with a longing for truth, for true humanity, and for happiness if all striving were to be vain, and everything illusion? *No, development is a law of nature.* The spirit of emancipation is already beginning to arise from the depths of the people. It may be hindered and flung back, but never subdued. It is the spirit which fails us not if we are but true to ourselves—the *spirit of popular emancipation through human culture.*

“But how is one to begin to bring this spirit into the slough of modern society, by means of education as the expression of true humanity?” So I questioned myself a thousand times. Shall it be by dynamite and bomb-shells, while we tear down everything that those who fought before us achieved? Will it be by our swearing obedience to a man who in his study, which is his world, creates an image of the human soul out of his own head, and then says: “Behold! there you have it; thus it is! Get you quickly to work; and if you act, as I have explained the soul to you, then you will conjure up new men and a new world.” Is that the way?

There was no change in me so long as I kept to book-learning, to the mists of speculation and metaphysical subtleties. But at last, when I became a naturalist, I recognised that there is only one force, *one* development; and only *one* nature and humanity, and *one* truth. I saw clearly, that the new tie with the new spirit can be possible only when the *natural* tie between man and nature, which no mortal created, becomes the *old* one; for it is truth, that true education can be no other than that *in which man and nature find each other again*. What can therefore be a nearer aim than to make the original relation between man and nature, by a life of culture derived from nature herself, if one were able to combine the natural laws of growth into a system, and to place them at the service of man’s education? Shall we say this is not possible to the human mind, which has accomplished such great things, and which owes to nature all that is best in itself? Is it not able to lay bare those sources (of its own power) as

one draws a golden vessel, from rubbish and ashes, into the light of day ?

I concentrated my whole thoughts and meditations upon this one aim—upon *true, natural education*, untroubled about the conflict of opinions, and unconcerned as to whether the clique of the learned with their docile adherents ridiculed me or not. It ought to be clear to every one that education cannot be that which a university philosopher has arranged for himself ; one who wants to convince us that he has discovered the nature of the soul, and that one need only educate men in accordance with speculations ; but no more can it be that which teaches the outer world as natural history, as one finds it in a hundred books. One who looks at nature, as the tourist looks at a mountain, does not see into her depths. No, one must look deep.

And what does one find if one looks deep ? *One sees oneself reflected in her*. Nature has never deceived any one ; she has faithfully preserved our image ; no power on earth can destroy it. In the depths of nature we see ourselves again as the son sees himself in his mother's face.

But what does it mean that man sees himself reflected in nature ? It means *he sees in her his own Ego, as well as the roots of human culture*.

The life which created the apparently dead stones and plants created us also, and works in us according to the same laws ; the life which animated the animals, from the most microscopically minute to those most like to man, gave us life also. We may write books about the soul, but we cannot explain it. Whoever will draw up a scheme of the human

soul, as an architect does his building plan, should first study the animal soul, and whosoever studies the animal soul will find his own reflected in it. It is folly to aim at thoroughly exploring the soul by itself; he who wishes to know a part must study the *whole*, for everything is *part* of the whole, *no effect without cause, no force without matter*. The human soul may be more perfect than that of the animals, but it is not different. Because man is a part of nature he sees himself in her; when a child he will play with an animal, or with flowers, as parts of the same life with his own. Forms and colours, sounds and scents, the laws, truths, and beauties in the realm of nature, affect us like another and similar Ego; and so we find ourselves again in nature, with our musings and meditations. Everywhere we feel the same breath, the same spirit, and the same hand, which binds everything and sets free everything; *we see ourselves again in nature*.

But we see also in her the roots of all human toil. How otherwise have beauty and art developed, except from the artistic beauty of nature? Painting, music, and sculpture, have they not their origins in nature, or what would they be without her? From what else but from nature have the sciences developed themselves? Are they not latent in her, like the seed in the pulp of the fruit? Geography is only one side of nature, and physics, chemistry, botany, mineralogy, zoology and geology, physiology, psychology and biology, are her children. And mathematical science, that sublime daughter of nature, is she not contained in nature, in her forms and measures, quantities and conditions of space, from

the cell and the dew-drop up to the laws of the heavenly bodies? What is history other than the continuation of what the primary processes of nature prefigured? Has not every stone its history? And what can philosophers do but frame laws, which shall not come into conflict with those of nature? How came we to philosophise but through nature with her riddles and mysteries, her causes and effects? How came we to pedagogy but through nature, which already taught primeval man to develop his child physically and mentally? It is with all culture, mental and physical, as with the arts and sciences—it *has its roots in nature*. Nature is the teacher and educator of humanity, her daughter. The best ideas, and the most useful institutions—in a word, the whole of culture came not down from heaven to earth, nor from the heads of students, but it takes its way, like nature herself, *from below upwards*; first and last, from the beginning until to-day, it came to us from the depths; nature is the primitive source, our bodily and spiritual mother, wherefore she never deserts us. Great souls have realised this: John Locke, Bacon, and Shakespeare; Comenius and Rousseau; Pestalozzi, Goethe, Humboldt, and others; but they were all decried by those who want to have men educated through *books*, and that for all imaginable reasons, conscious and unconscious.

The great question which moves me, "*How must natural education come to pass?*" admits of only one answer, and this is: *because the world and man are one organic whole; because nature is the reflected image of man; and the essence of this organic whole is development; and there is only one development.*

*Education can only be that which transforms the objective life of development—the outer world—into the subjective, i.e., the human inner world.*

If one is able to put pedagogy upon the natural basis—and of that there is no longer any doubt—then from the one the other must follow ; the school must cease to be the creature of priests, *noblesse*, and millionaires ; she must cease to live on the wisdom which metaphysicians prescribe for her—that is, *the school must become an objective school of education and pedagogy a natural science.*

Naturalists and natural philosophers have unlocked an edifice which no theologian and no book-philosopher can set aside—the *logic of nature*. This it is that moves the world ; to it everything will and must conform. *Development* is the word of redemption, the new gospel for all who languish in bondage. Wherever we look we see its dawn ; it is the stimulating power of nations, as of the individual ; in science and art, in trade and commerce, in mental and in material work, this principle is now being *universally* recognised as a candle in the darkness of night, as the new star of Bethlehem. And this vanquisher, the iron logic of the world's work with its laws, which no one can escape, which crushes even the most obstinate defiance of those who oppose it, is it not going to be the pole-star of a new education of humanity ? Will it not overcome the unnatural education to which millions of children fell victims, and cause a better and more beautiful life to spring up, as the spring sun brings out the violet from among snow and ice ? Will not nature's logic put an end to an education which had its origin in



force, in the dogmas of priests and the brains of speculative psychologists, which went so far that everything is accounted natural which does not oppose the interests of church teachers, statesmen, and college professors? I, for my part, assert that it is not the wisdom of holders of livings and academic chairs which *comes first*, and nature with her laws and truths, *second*; but that the logic of nature, and the truth of the world's development, hold the first place.

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It is evident that pedagogy can only have a meaning when it has an aim, and the aim has a meaning. Most frequently the aim of education is expressed by the axiom, *Man is to be educated in accordance with his Destiny*. But what is his destiny? Is it to be sought in happiness or in suffering, in enjoyment or in renunciation? Does life exist, as Fichte says, for the fulfilment of the moral law; or as theology teaches, is man's destiny to be transferred from this world to another? Or what *is* destiny, and what is destiny to predestine?

Until now school and educational theory have not got beyond this, and, on that account, science and the university do not regard them as equals; and they are claimed by theology as her appendages.

The question, *whether pedagogy belongs to theology*, whether belief is to be decisive, must be *negatived* at the outset as mere opinion. The fact that the School was developed out of the Church, and that it daily

degenerates more and more through this dependence on the Church, is sufficient to assure to pedagogy its rights ; for if it has become evident, after centuries, that education through the Church no longer answers, then history has proved that school and theory of teaching have a right to independence. If school and pedagogy were to be declared appendages of theology and Church, there would be an end of them. To the many existing religions, confessions, and sects, many new ones would be added, and the whole of education would become a chaos, a Babel of confusion and blundering ; caprice would rule, for the *conception of education* would be annulled by that of *destiny*, and the objective means of education, as well as the foundation of pedagogy as a science, would become *illusory*. On the question, to whom does pedagogy belong, neither belief nor heart must be listened to, but *thought*, unless knowledge and science are to be handed over to *dogma*.

As often as the question of fixing the aim of education was dealt with, *philosophy*, therefore, had to be consulted, ethics and psychology being of fundamental importance ; for ethics attempts to settle the destiny of man, and psychology searches for traces of the soul's development. Ethics declares its aim to be *education in morality*. But if we ask which morality is the true, the absolutely valid morality, that which has been at all times valid, and which is to be valid for all times and in all places, then the answer is not forthcoming ; for such a theory of morality has never, up to the present time, existed. Therefore, ethics and philosophy might be denied the right to influence the

theory of education, were it not beyond all doubt that every century does something to *clear away* moral principles which do not find universal recognition, and to elevate, that is to *universalise*, those that are everywhere recognised. In other words, it is a *fact*, that there *are* moral ideas, which are the property of all civilised races, different as they may be one from another. This fact is fundamental.

Because morality is the harmony of knowledge with will and action, and knowledge and will are the products of the factors of education—which, however, from the beginning differed, and will differ—moral perception and moral will may originate in causes which are very diverse, even contrary to one another. In other words, because the question, “to whom does pedagogy belong,” depends upon the question “which of the powers explains the aim of education?” pedagogy must be in the service of that one which is able clearly and distinctly to fix the aim and idea of education, and to make it independent of all temporary spiritual phases of human development; so that the conception of morality and education becomes *a law of nature*—that is, pedagogy must work upon that basis which reveals the laws of all being and development—that is on the foundation of nature; and it must be possible to determine those laws which, independently of time and place, help man forward, make him freer, better, more moral, just as it is possible to find those laws which demonstrate the unity of the world. For that very reason pedagogy can only work under an ethical theory, which is the expression of *unity*—that is, *ethics must become a moral teaching, which is also nature-teaching.*

That this will take place is no longer doubtful; already for thousands it is not the Church nor theology, but nature, which is the teacher of morality.

As objective ethics cannot be founded upon speculation, but on the relation of man to nature, so psychology must stand on the same footing in the service of natural moral teaching. Just as science and belief cannot be united, so ethics as nature-teaching cannot be combined with a metaphysical theory of the soul—that is, if philosophy is to be at the service of pedagogy, psychology must also be put on the basis of *natural* ethics, or that of *nature*. Even the most ingenious speculation cannot satisfy the pedagogue; the contradiction remains, one belief is replaced by another. Truths, which one cannot comprehend, belong to the realm of belief. Before we pay attention to a metaphysician's plan of education, we prefer keeping to the laws of reality; and though we have not at once a complete scheme before us, yet truth will beautify more and more the scheme that we have; whilst we add stone to stone we shall be following nature, which teaches us that truth is not complete but is always growing. We must value a psychology only so far as it opens out the nature of man in *that* way in which nature is disclosed, viz., *by way of experiment*. Experimental psychology only, that which works on the same lines as natural history, is the natural soul-science. This psychology does not concern itself with the impossible, or with experimenting at random upon the soul, but with its outworks, the organs of sense and motion, whose functions stand in relation to the past conditions

of the soul, because every psychological experiment is at the same time a physiological one; *physical* processes always correspond to *psychical* ones. The psychology founded by Fechner and Wundt must, therefore, sometime lead to a sure path, which will bring the soul's life and the body's life into organic combination, and will make man one with nature, and thereby deduce from one principle the explanation of the universe.

This basis of unity is nature, the world of phenomena to which we belong. Because nature is an organic whole, ethics cannot be a speculative, but an inductive, an experimental, a *natural science*, which does not derive moral laws from so-called ethical systems, but expounds those laws of morality which are the *universal* property of man. On the other hand, a moral theory, which is rooted in the whole organism of man, and which is a natural theory, demands a *psychology*, which draws its nourishment from the same soil; that is to say, is equally a *natural science*. The consequence is, that *pedagogy*, the theory of education, like natural ethics and psychology, must be placed upon the basis of nature, and because its essence is development, it can be nothing else but the *theory of human development in conformity with that of the universe*. The old question whether teaching is an art is futile; teaching is not a capacity to produce something which gives an impression of the beautiful; nor, like "art" taken in a wider sense, is it a kind of skill; such as the art of writing or cooking. We should in this case have to call it an inborn gift, like that of the finch, which builds its nest and

brings up its young, as the mother does her child. Then we should need nothing else, the talent would be there ; but as with the finch and the savage we should not get beyond a certain level of development. Pedagogy is no more an art than is medicine, which demands various kinds of skill, and practice, and exercise of senses and limbs. Education is, like all development, a *power* ; *pedagogy* however, is no art, but an edifice of theories, the *theory of development*, and truly the sublimest of all, that of *human development*. Because the drop of water and the stone, because plant, animal, and man develop according to law as parts of the organic unity ; and because obedience to law is matter of research, and research is science, pedagogy, the theory of human development, must also be *a science* ; and because the objective is the essence of scientific research, and objective development of man (founded on the relation to universal development) is possible, therefore pedagogy, as a science, cannot belong either to belief or to speculation, neither to theology nor to pure philosophy. And as neither natural, objective ethics—moral theory as a natural theory—is, nor can ever be, the whole of pedagogy, which has its foundation rather *in the organic development of the whole*, pedagogy must, in union *with the new ethics and psychology*, be self-dependent, and raise itself to be like them, a science of experience, a *natural science*.

\* \* \* \* \*

These fundamental thoughts and principles to

which I have attained, I owe not to imagination and speculation but to *experience gained by individual work*; and since the best way is the natural way, I will indicate *the history* of my struggles in a few touches; I recognised the contradiction between theory and theory, between practice and practice. Doubt it was that helped me on. The struggle of theorising minds disgusted, and the poverty of results pained, me. Herbartians *here*, "common-place" teachers *there*; *here* Church pedagogy, *there* pessimism and negation! Confusion right and left, and no prospect of reconciliation, with miserable results almost everywhere. Theory remained in the same condition as the school, and both were as the teacher was; no one knew where and to whom they belonged, and at the same time the school was the bone of contention to the parties who made profit of it.

The whole struggle spelt "fruitlessness." I turned away from it, and had recourse to private research.

But I soon lost courage. As if scales had fallen from my eyes, the highly renowned teaching-structure stood before me in its true character. The closer I observed the drearier things looked about me. At last I saw nothing but coercion and nonsense. When I took a child into my hands I trembled. How was I to educate this innocent being?

"What!" I cried; "are you to stunt and maim mentally and physically this most sensitive being? You call yourself an educator, and are compelled to force this image of the Godhead. from whose eyes

a new world is shining, through a mass of perverseness, lies, and hypocrisy." Whether I examined the whole or the details, the method or its effect, there was naught but disappointment upon disappointment. There was no conformity to law, no unity. Education unified, organic, objective—that is natural—alone can give Harmony, Freedom, and Beauty.

\* \* \* \* \*

When two pedestrians have walked a long way on the road together, and one of them has disclosed the struggles which life has brought him, the other, before they come to the parting of their ways, will hazard the question: *Was victory granted you? Have you peace after the fight?*

If you (dear reader) were to question me thus I might look into your face, and you perhaps would read in mine that I never for a moment pursued the good fortune sought by the world at large—place, money, title, honours. But when I see the gleam of intelligence in a child's eye; when I find talent in a youth, and open up to him a new world; when a mother thanks me for saving her child, whom the school had rejected; then I feel what I call happiness. I feel myself educated, as in the quietness of nature, by the beauty of life, which became mine—unearned.

And yet there rankled in my breast a thorn, which I could but slowly extract. I gave my endeavour and my thought to the founding of natural education, and what did I experience?



The struggle in my own breast between (outer) bondage, and (inner) freedom was terrible. Doubt was more quickly overcome; for the longing after truth is followed at last by peace. But how was it with results?

Those who professed to advance the science (of education, to wit) from the midst of their book-dust looked down with scorn. Herbartians and Empirics, alike sang, "*Noli me tangere.*" I did not understand it. My mood became bitter and depressed. Sometimes I thought the cause was that I had no office or dignity. Should I found a periodical, and send it to every schoolmaster so as, at least, to be heard? Then I sometimes dreamed that I *was* understood. Strangers sought my acquaintance, and greetings came from many quarters. But—*success*; a serious taking-up of the question in literature—by the Press—or at educational meetings, I saw nowhere! The schoolmasters were silent; even the Comenius Society, which made me an honorary member, had not a word for the method which is the natural continuation of Amos Comenius' work.

At last I understood. I recognised the up and down in the growth of humanity, and saw in that, as in nature, the same law—that of perseverance.

Though I had suffered from my youth upwards under priestcraft and dogma, I only now recognised in them the real hindrance to my cause. I saw the mutual relations of Church and State; I saw their influence on the masses of the people, which renders vain the inspiring dreams of truth, freedom, and beauty, and contrives to buttress the vulgarest interests with obsolete ideas. Within this charmed

circle all must live who have something to say, and wish to be heard ; and I had put myself outside it !

Now it became clear to me *why* the obscurantists wished to disarm me ; and why the teachers were silent, or, at most, applauded me under their breath !

“ This atheist who presumes to take from the teachers their belief wants to found a godless school, to proclaim bare atheism in place of religion ! He dares to call a school without religion—natural ! Away with him ! ”

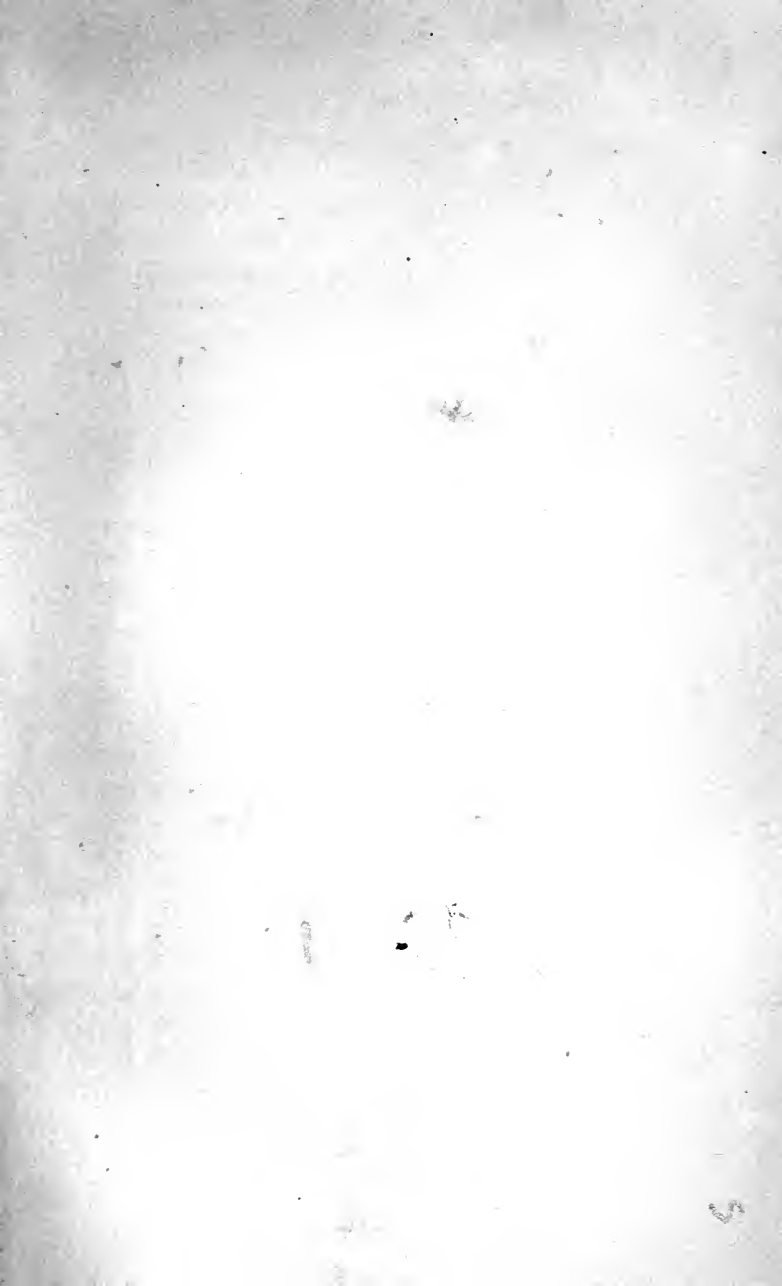
But I reply to these would-be persecutors, masked as friends of man : “ Is your endeavour more honest, or your action purer, than mine ? Have I not often said that Christ’s teaching is a pure teaching, and worthy to be taught ? Is he an atheist who wants the education of fact, and carries over to man the development of all being ? How can it be atheistic to take the Creator’s own work as the model for the development of his creatures ? And is it not this education, and this one only, which founds the true, the pure religion, *that of the sacredness of all life* which speaks even out of the dust to which our body returns ? No one has the right to call another, who devotes his life to the young, “ atheist,” for he is penetrated by the divine principle of life ; nor to assert that my conception of education is a low one. The kingdom of God is within us, and education can have no higher aim than to cultivate our inborn impulses to moral action in accordance with the laws of habit and progressive growth, to the point at which they become irresistible.

Who can doubt that I struggled on till I attained

peace? Peace is grounded on knowledge, and knowledge springs from inquiry. I need no theory about God, heaven, or earth. I do not fear the devil or hell, but myself, and the sting of my own conscience; and I know that the God who created me did not create me for annihilation. I know that I must be what I am; and that the true religion cannot be an alms which the priests have forced upon the masses; *but the deed of love and devotion in the service of a world which no mortal created.* I feel myself a conscious atom of the divine world, whose infinitude and law-abiding quality thrill through me so that I am ready to fall prostrate in the feeling of human nothingness. I see salvation, and the future, no longer in bayonets or by-laws, in priests or police, but in that education in freedom of thought and belief which leads to culture, welfare, and happiness. Everything great which humanity has achieved I see to be the natural product of *her* original powers, *her* conditions of life; wherefore I pronounce education, which works in this sense, to be the noblest human work. This education—life has taught me—is rooted in nature alone, wherefore my cry is to-day as yesterday: “Return to nature!” This way alone can loosen the bonds which strangle humanity; this way only can untie the knot in one’s own breast. This return to nature will also set free the world of teachers, so that they will no longer submit to have educational theory dictated to them by pedants, who use pedagogy as a milch-cow; but will cry to them: “Education belongs neither to priests nor philosophers; it belongs to the educators.” To-day I know that *true* success is not dazzling, but

inconspicuous. To-day I know that my wrestling has not been in vain.

We are at the parting of the ways ! I have drawn a slight picture of my life. The best of what filled my heart, what I have felt and striven for, could not be clothed in words. Perhaps you have learned to know the husk only because the kernel is indescribably minute ; but perhaps you have a fellow feeling ; and then we will clasp our hands, and part.



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